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JASPER COUNTY'S YESTERTOWNS

Compiled - Edited - Published

By

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A PAGE FROM VANDALIA VISITOR, 1880

THE VANDALIA VISITOR
PUBLISHED WEEKLY
BY J. H. HARRIS
VANDALIA, ILL.
Subscription Price, \$1.00 per Annum in Advance.
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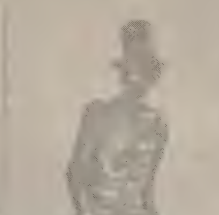
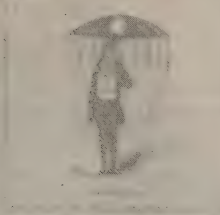
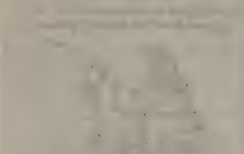
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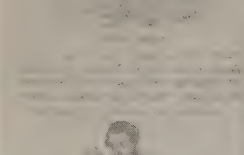
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I and put up his stone pipes with out
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Young Democracy, wraps an umbrella,
and I catch a certain column advertisement
with a New York paper.

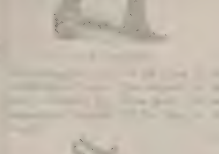
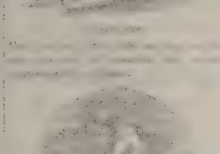
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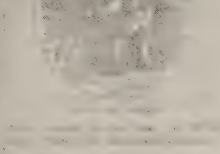
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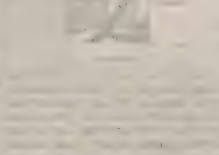
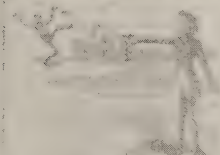
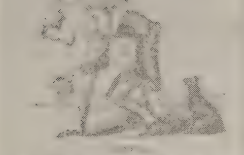
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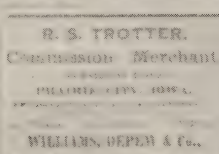
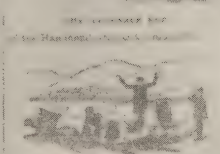
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FOREWORD

In 1942 a group of Newton people interested in creative writing formed The Newton Writers Club. As in other groups there has been a turnover in membership through the years. Only a few of the charter members remain. However, interest in the group spread outside of Newton. In time the name was changed to Jasper County Writers Club. There are now active members from various parts of the County.

Some years ago the group became interested in the history of Jasper County. There has been a lot of work and time spent on this project of Yestertowns in the County. When pioneer settlers came to this area they found wealth in the fertile soil. In some areas they found coal. A number of small communities sprang up over the County in those early days.

As the rail lines came many a small, thriving community was by-passed. Business moved to railroad points and the small, isolated towns began to decline. Likewise when coal gave out near a small town, the people moved away and the town gradually disappeared.

The 'horseless buggy' took another toll of the small communities. Many young people today may not even know about these Yestertowns of Jasper County, how they came and went in the comparatively short time of slightly over a century.

As a group the Jasper County Writers Club wishes to thank all people who have helped to make this project possible, those who gave information, and those who took time to go and find material, and the people who compiled and edited this little book about Yester-towns.

The Jasper County Writers Club is grateful to all who loaned help to this project.

---J. E. Soderblom,
Charter Member.

"YESTERTOWN"

Remember, one hundred years or so,
When the Pioneers came through?

In Jasper County they settled down
Where here and there a mining town
Was built and quickly grew.

The railroads played an important role
In the founding of the village.
It created an output for their coal,
Which gave the miners courage.

In the course of time a Church was built
Where the families here could worship
Together and give thanks to God
For His mercies through their hardship.

The stagecoach lines will run no more,
The mines are all closed down.
There isn't even a little store
Left in this "Yestertown".

Stella Maxwell
Stella Maxwell

AMBOY

Opal M. Snyder

About three and one-half miles northeast of Newton, located in Kellogg Township, lies the little neighborhood of Amboy, first named Hammer's Grove in honor of its first settlers, Elisha Hammer and his sons, one daughter and a grandson.

Like the Bible fathers, Elisha Hammer left Tennessee with his sons, Seth, Henry, Ira, Jesse, Aaron, and Elisha to put down roots "in the new land." He also brought along his daughter Polly Ann and one grandson, Mahlon.

The Hammers wintered in Keokuk, then in the spring, bought land in the area we know as Amboy, for \$1.25 an acre. There was some timber, but the farm land was rich black loam, and today the market value of the land is between \$350 and \$400 an acre.

The Amboy area was first along an old Indian trail, which later developed into a stage coach line on the road to Marshalltown. From the trail of the tribes the road developed into a graded dirt road, then it was graveled in 1961.

After the Hammers were here awhile the town became known as "Stringtown" probably because houses sprang up along the road.

The history of Amboy is closely tied to the history of its Faith, for Amboy was settled by the Quakers, or Friends, who still maintain a church in this area.

In many congregations today, it is still unusual to have a lady minister, yet the first one to serve the little pioneer church was a lady, Matilda White. She led her flock in 1854, and old records list a Jacob Ballard as the following minister.

It was customary for the Quakers, when they moved into a new area, to build a church first, then a school. Early records show a home was used for services and doubled as a school. About 1851 the first church was built and the second one around 1866. The first separate school house, made of brick, was built at the time of the erection of the first church. No one knows just when the school passed from the control of the church into the hands of the general school district. The last rural school house of the area is still standing, but does not operate since reorganization of the school districts took place.

Center Friends Meeting was the first meeting in Jasper County and the last of the three churches still operates and is known as "Friends's Church." The church was remodeled and enlarged in 1915 and the parsonage built in 1918. This same church was again remodeled with basement and electricity and furnace installed in 1933. The church continues to exist, but not on a very sound basis...not many members left, but is kept up very nicely inside and out and still maintains a minister. At present a young man from Penn College at Oskaloosa is serving the community.

No one knows exactly when the area dropped the name of

Stringtown and became known as Amboy, nor are there any record of why the town was named Amboy. Many old timers call the amboy road "Stringtown Road" and the old bridge erected before the river was straightened is still known as Stringtown Bridge.

However, we do know the area was called Amboy when the railroad came through and there is a record of a David Gotschal and his wife platting the town in January, 1872. In 1867 the railroad ran through the town and there was a lumber yard, small cattle yard, a brick yard, a general store, a blacksmith shop and a post office. As late as 1904 a telegraph agent and his wife lived in a home beside the railroad tracks.

During the Civil War, Elisha Hammer, son of the pioneer Elisha, became the Quaker minister serving the community and he built a brick house that became a "station" in the underground railway. The "underground" was a series of stops where slaves were helped to freedom in Canada. The house still stands, and no wonder, its walls were sixteen inches thick, high ceilings and the second story was reached through a circular stairway. It is still occupied today by an employee of Mr. Ralph Moore, who presently owns the land.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hill are living on the home farm of Henry and Hannah Hammer who gave the land to the church. Mrs. Hill, as a child, fondly remembers her great grandmother who used the Biblical language of the Quakers, "thee and thou."

Because Newton and Kellogg had similar industries, Amboy reverted to its original rural life, yet cannot truly be labeled a ghost town. For her roots were put down in the fertile fields of faith by the gentle hands of Matilda White; made strong by the defenders of her Faith...and the "Friends Church" is still today as it was then, a living monument to the memory of these Quaker pioneers.

CLYDE

Jean Gleaves Poage

Clyde, eighteen miles northwest of Newton, was the oldest trading center in that section of Jasper County. For twenty five years or more, it grew, and thrived, and hoped for a railroad to come and unite it with Green Castle, Newton, and the eastern markets, but like many other villages, the railroad bypassed the little hamlet. The ghost still hovers over the site, but today a store, repair shop and filling station mark the new Clyde one-half mile to the west along bustling Highway 64.

"I was a thirteen year old boy," reminisced Edd Haley of Baxter, "when my parents moved to a farm one mile south of Clyde. I'm going on 83 now, so that would have been around 1890. I remember that Bill Stier had given the land for the town square and the church. The Danny McGrand house is now on the square."

The story goes that in September of '57, V. M. Heller, a surveyor by profession, and Joseph West and their wives platted the town of Clyde; the plat being recorded on September 22. By 1878, the town boasted of twelve to fifteen dwellings, several stores, shops, and a church.

This church, Methodist Episcopal, was erected and dedicated November 15, 1874. Elkanah Preston supervised its construction. The building was 40' by 60' and cost \$2500. The spire and bell were gifts of Warren Maxwell of State Center. Mr. Haley says, "Folks sure hated to see the old church go but it was bought by Albert Berry and converted into a hog barn. Benny Sumpter owns the farm now."

"Baldwin and Maxwell had owned stores in three towns,-- Colo, Cambridge, and Iowa Center, when in 1866, they opened up a fourth store in Clyde. It was a general store selling most anything you can think of. After twenty years, the store was sold to Lemual Neal and Robert Tripp. Frank Higby opened up a store in 1874, selling drugs, groceries and hardware. But in my time, Phil Eddy and John Stier both had stores. Guess I remember Preacher Hammock's store and his huckster wagon the best of all. He had moved up from Metz, preaching at Oak Ridge schoolhouse (Kintz) on Sundays and traveling around on week-days. The wagon had rails around the top--kept the eggs he had traded for up there. In the back, he pulled out big drawers loaded with groceries."

Clyde had a postoffice from 1859 to 1903, "usually in one of the stores,---Frank Higby's and John Stier's anyway. Yes, there was always a doctor. The first one I recollect was old Doc Miller. Later, he moved and opened up a dive on the south corner of North Main Street in Baxter---sold whiskey. Then there was a Doc Pershall, Vern's father."

School children in the Clyde neighborhood were divided. The Newton Journal for August 22, 1883 gives the honor roll for the school one and one-fourth mile to the north. The roll included, "Clara Hall, Edna and Pearl Maus, Mary and Altie Kintz, Gertrude and Laura Mitchell and Sadie Thompson." It is interesting to note that (Cynthia) Pearl Maus has become one of the foremost American leaders in religious education. She is the author of CHRIST AND THE FINE ARTS---an anthology of great paintings, poetry and literature dealings with the life of Christ.

"I attended Oak Ridge," says Edd Haley, "along with Anna, Milt and Ross Mowry; Maude, Blanche and Lee Dodd; the Hoys, Billy and Maggie; the Longs,--Jimmie, Clarence, Lily and Pearl; the David Thompsons,--four or five of them, and the Brower boys whose brother Jim published the first newspaper at Baxter."

When Edd was asked what the young people did for amusements, he laughed. "We had to create our own good times; not like today's entertainments. We had spelling matches, 'ciphering', racing up and down Clyde streets; horses, dogs, just anything that could run. We had box suppers and occasionally one ended up in a fist fight, but that I better not tell."

"I remember the Neal brothers. Lemual, the storekeeper was a cripple and he spent a lot of time carving wooden puppets. Carved a baseball player that was a whiz. He and his brother Jefferson put on shows, comical ones. Jeff never went to school but he was always the spokesman. I can still hear him say, 'Audience, give 'tenshun. Show 'mences. Can't show 'thout order.'

"We thought something was wrong if we couldn't hoof it in to Clyde every night. The blacksmith, Perry Morrison, liked boxing, so he'd clean up a space for us fellows. We had chipped in and bought two pairs of boxing gloves. There we'd practice with Morrison criticizing our slugs, until we were good enough to box with the Ira and Mingo clubs. We had lots of fun!"

Edd has the distinction of owning the first modern bicycle in northwest Jasper. In 1889, bicycles became the rage in Iowa and it is said that 10,000 Iowans were put on wheels in five years. In those days when Edd met horses on the road, he had to get off, push the bicycle to the side of the road and stand quietly.

Possibly Edd with his bicycle and countless other riders played a part in the improvement of Iowa's road system. Today, Clyde is surrounded by a rich farming area serviced by a splendid highway and good market to market roads. The old town site is a ghost of the past; not so, the new Clyde along Highway 64.

DRAPER

Irene Alllison Morton

Why go west to see a ghost town surrounded by abandoned mines? Jasper County has several of them. They may not hold the glamour of gold and silver, one could hardly call coal glamorous, but the net result is the same. The coal mines, like gold and silver, have collapsed and filled up with water. Nothing is left but wreckage.

Homes have vanished and business places in the little village of Draper have closed their doors and disappeared.

It was just a temporary town, a coal mining town, established around 1880. There was a locally owned mine at first, then the Gilcrist Mining Company took over and established a town, which had only one general store. This store sold food, clothing and a variety of necessities to the immediate families in the vicinity. It was owned by the mining company, as was the coal office adjoining it, where miners were employed. The post office was in the general store.

Will McConeghey of Monroe recalls the store being under three different managers who were employed by the Gilcrist Company. There was Archie Morton, a man named Schuyler, and Sam

Mount. The former was studying to become a doctor and remained only long enough to acquire the necessary money to finish his schooling.

There had been one small store before the Gilcrist Company came, but it only stayed open a short time. It was taken over later by the Disciples of Christ and used as a church.

Besides the general store, coal office and post office, there was a saloon.

Along with Irish, there were Swedes, English and one Dutch family. One of Draper's first settlers was the mine boss, Phil Hall. The second mine boss was a Swede named Gus Selynder. Other names McConeghey remembers were Erickson and Johnson.

Draper consisted of two rows of houses on the hill and about twenty around the business center.

Many farmers in the vicinity had small farms, forty acres or less, which they farmed in the summer. In the winter they worked in the mines.

Draper had a school, but it only lasted six months a year and there was no regular school building. The road through the town divided it into two different school districts, Oak Grove and Enterprise. These schools had as many as fifty pupils each, most of them coming from Draper. Boys attended school until they were old enough to work in the mines.

There was the Armory Baptist Church which has since been dismantled. It was about a mile south of the village. Tool's Chapel, a Methodist Church, was about a mile and a quarter east.

The first telephone line ran from Monroe to the company office in Draper and on to Newton. This was before there were telephones in any homes.

The village of Draper was situated on rolling hills about four miles east of Monroe. It had few conveniences.

The only reminder of the town, with a life span of approximately twenty years, is the blackened hills, the rotted members of the tippie, and the waste piles of gob and shale, where one can wander and perhaps hear the echoes of the ghosts of by-gone days.

FAIRMOUNT

Irene Allison Morton

Here I lie still, a passing memory of a small, once flourishing town, close enough to the capitol sight which was once laid out for the state of Iowa, to be almost a part of it. It was a dream which was soon abandoned however, because of the water shortage. I am alone and neglected, almost forgotten now. People pass on to more promising places.

Once I boasted a cheese factory, a store, grain elevator, depot, produce house, blacksmith shop, millinery shop, grain

office and church. The daily train, whose tracks lie to the north of me, still travels the rails, once in the morning, once at night. Now, all this is past and gone but a few remaining dwelling houses scattered about and a sign, still intact, which says in big letters "Fairmount". I was located half way between the town of Monroe to the southeast and Prairie City to the northeast, in Fairview township.

Some of the first people to settle on my prosperous and beautifully located land were John Mead, Sam McRunnells and Osten Montgomery. It was William Montgomery who donated the land on which I was built.

My first store was operated by George Volk. It was only a small frame building but later Mr. Volk built a larger store. It was called a general store and sold a variety of things from groceries to threshing machines. Nearly everyone charged groceries, clothing, and so forth and paid for them later with butter and eggs. In this store people could buy Arbuckle coffee for 25¢ a pound, 5½ pounds of bacon for 55¢, 10 pounds of ham for \$1.25 and a broom for 35¢. Eggs were 15¢ for two dozen. Sugar, butter, vinegar, crackers and molasses came in barrels. The first wrapped bread in this store was called "everybody's bread". This store lasted until 1924, then burned down. Then a small store was built and later moved to Monroe to be used as F.F.A. building.

The postoffice was located in the general store. Mr. Volk was postmaster. Two mails were received and one sent out daily. In 1910 this postoffice transacted only One Hundred dollars worth of postal business.

Next to my general store was a millinery shop. I also had a grain office run by Mr. Andrew Jackson Porter, a civil war veteran. My produce house, which handled chickens, eggs, grain, livestock and cheese, was run by Chet Rhoades, who was also the village blacksmith.

North of the blacksmith shop was a dwelling house built by Jack Porter. This house, which was the Volk home, became a boarding house for visiting salesmen, teachers, station agents and others. It was known as the Inn and the stage coach stop.

The railroad came in 1863. In 1864 the early settlers hauled lumber for the depot from Ottumwa, by team and wagon. The land for the depot was donated by John Hummell. This depot had living quarters, a nice big waiting room, and ticket office. Osten Montgomery was the first operator.

There was a scale house here, also a siding which was half a mile long. At least a dozen big corn cribs stood across the railroad tracks to the north. They would shell corn there and the whole siding would be full of cars which almost overflowed with shelled corn. Also across from the track, was a stockyard, where lots of livestock was handled. I even had the advantage of a daily paper, the Des Moines Capitol, which was thrown off the evening train.

The elevator, built by Mr. Porter, was located northwest of the railroad tracks.

My cheese factory was located one mile north and three-fourths of a mile west. It was operated by Carl Churchill.

My first telephone was placed in the Volks store and people would come from miles around to see it. Before the era of the telephone, settlers took advantage of the telegraph to call doctor Hendershot of Monroe. He would come to see sick folks there by train or horse and buggy.

The first refrigeration for the general store was an old house located in the back. Ice was brought here from a pond.

There were two rural grade schools. One was a mile north, and the other a mile south. "One advantage of having both schools," reminisces Wayne Volk, who still resides at Fairmount, "as when the teacher got tired of me, then I could transfer to the other."

My church, a Methodist denomination, was organized in 1877. The building was erected two years later at a cost of \$19.00. It was a frame building with a steeple, dedicated September 20, 1899, by Rev. Cullen. Elegant dinners were held in the church basement at a charge of twenty-five to thirty-five cents. People would drive for miles to attend these dinners. After the decline of the town the church closed, the building was sold at auction, removed from the premises and wrecked.

The 1880's to the 1890's saw the land as a terrific potato area. Potatoes were loaded onto the railroad by the car loads in the fall of the year.

Wayne Volk says that before my railroad came people had to travel with horses and they only went to Newton once or twice a year. He says his mother made butter and sold it to the railroad people for 25¢ a pound. He likes to remember butchering time when they killed five or six hogs and rendered lard in an old iron kettle in the yard. They made headcheese, scrapie, sausage, etc. They cleaned the casings themselves and made a sausage stuffer to fill them. Then they fried them down, put them in store jars and covered them with lard. They would keep a long time that way.

Well, I like to remember when my hitching rack was full of horses, and Colonel Byers, a poet, stayed over night at my Inn. I like to remember the drummer boys too, who came with trunks full of samples. They always called the Inn to reserve their meals. Guess they must have been afraid they wouldn't get anything to eat unless they were expected. I also remember when some of my boys built a fire out of corn cobs, then roasted chickens over it. They celebrated all night by dancing on the old board platform of my railroad station.

But fires took their toll of my business places, automobiles robbed my railroad of its business, and many of my people moved away. Thus a once proud town, a location of level land with a beautiful view, and a hoped for city is gone. I, like many other ghost towns, have sunk back into the past, where few remember and reminisce over my past prosperity. They leave me to lie at rest, lost in the shuffle and boom of more prosperous cities close around me.

GALESBURG

Della Wade Peery

Many changes have taken place in Iowa since the first white settlers arrived. Most of these changes are the outcome of progress, a progress which could perhaps be described as a giant machine building towns, cities, highways, railroads and industries as it crushed the life out of the old frontier. Driving over Iowa's roads today, one can see rural schoolhouses with windows boarded up, abandoned railroads and coalmines and now and then a distant church spire towering above an obscure little village which had once been a booming frontier town.

Such a village is Galesburg, located in Elk Creek township, section 16, five miles east of Reasnor in the southern part of Jasper County. The small cluster of houses scattered about the town square, the old fashioned two story frame building which houses the Masonic Lodge, the garage on the east, the little country store on the northeast corner and to the southeast the only remaining church with its tall white spire are a mute testimony of the town's former glory.

Elk Creek township was settled several years before Iowa was admitted to the union. Among the early settlers were Henry Kroh and Mr. and Mrs. Beal Sellman who made the trip all the way from Ohio in a wagon pulled by an ox team. Other early settlers were people named Dearing, Butin, Peery and Snodgrass. General James B. Weaver, in his 'past and Present of Jasper County, Volume one, states that some of the first nearby government land on record was entered by James A. Tool in 1847 and John J. Mudgett, 1856. Soon many other settlers followed and a community was established. According to Frank Kroh, son of Henry Kroh, many of these first settlers were buried in an old cemetery about two miles southeast of Galesburg on the Galesburg-Pella road. Jacob Dearing donated the land for this necessary spot.

Just north of this cemetery the settlers built their first schoolhouse, a log cabin. A man named L. D. Earp settled on a farm east of this school. His nephew Wyatt Earp, who was destined to become a famous marshall of the old West, stayed with him for a time during the Civil War and attended school in the log school house along with the children of the early settlers.

Traveling a long distance for supplies was difficult in those days and as the settlement grew the need for a trading post became more acute. So in 1855, Mr. and Mrs. William Burton platted the town of Galesburg. It was here on the village square that the settlers held their first Independence Day celebration. The men set up poles and covered them with brush to shield the celebrators from the hot July sun while the ladies prepared delicacies in their kitchens. A long table was placed under the shade and the food was laid out in family style. This event set a precedent. Galesburg held yearly Independence Day celebrations until after World War I. The day was

highlighted by music and oratory. There was a band, consisting of two fifes and a drum, a few fireworks and a merry-go-round. The latter was pulled by a horse that stood in the center and for many years its music consisted of songs by Jake McDuff, a retired clown.

In its heyday, Galesburg was on a stage coach route between Oskaloosa and Newton. The square was surrounded by business houses. Starting at the north on the east corner was a harness shop owned by Al Judson. Just west of the harness shop stood the Masonic and Eastern Star Hall, while the northwest corner boasted a general store built by the Smith Brothers. South of the Smith store, on the west side of the square was a brick building which housed a drug store operated by Dr. Parish, M.D. A hotel stood on the southwest corner and east of it was a frame building which contained another drug store run by Dr. Hart, M.D. East of this drug store was Morton's photograph gallery which was later sold to John Minor and turned into a harness shop. North of this building on the southeast corner of the square was Cy Hart's general store, a two story frame building, the second floor being used for public dances. North of Hart's was the Galesburg Post Office. Between Paul's general store on the northeast corner and the post office was Moser's wagon repair shop. Besides the two doctors already named, Galesburg had a third--Dr. Cornelius, M.D. The town also had a lawyer. Other businesses consisted of McNight's grist mill and four blacksmith shops run by Bradley, Brake, Renfro and Ramer. There were four churches---Christian, Methodist, and two Holland.

By this time Galesburg had its own school, a large barn-like frame building which stood north and west of the square. It had one teacher and from sixty to sixty-five scholars in grades one through eight. The school had blackboards and chalk but erasers consisted of a piece of sheep's wool nailed on a board. Textbooks used were McGuffey's reader, speller and arithmetic followed by Robinson's arithmetic and Swenton's history. Lacking opportunity for higher education, young people attended school until they were in their early twenties. Many of the boys attended only during winter since their help was needed on the farm. To get a diploma from grade school required much study and review as they had to write state tests and were graded on the tests alone. Grades made at school did not count.

Spelling Bees were cherished occasions when one school challenged another. They were held in the evening. The visiting school crowded into one wagon or bobsled and all went together. Other special days were Valentine's day when the rule was a big comic valentine for friends and a big lacy one for teacher and the particular girl you happened to be 'sweet' on. On the last day of school the whole community got together for a pot luck dinner to be followed by a program and an evening spelling bee. This method of group transportation and participation was carried over into young adulthood when they staged parties and dances in each other's homes. They square danced,

waltzed and schottished to violin and organ music or played such party games as 'Skip to My Lou', 'Catch the Squirrel', 'Pig in the Parlor', and 'Hot Time.'

Many settlers in Galesburg served in the Civil War. One man brought a negro boy home with him, the first and only one of his race to ever live in that community. This boy was treated like one of the family. He attended school with the white children and was liked by everyone.

Indians camped near Galesburg as it was close to timber and water. They moved about every two weeks, tying long willow poles lengthwise on each side of their ponies and hanging baskets full of their possessions on each end. In speaking of the Indians, Frank Kroh had this to say, "It is said that Indians never forget and I believe that is true. Once after a bad snow storm two Indian braves came to my father's farm and begged for straw. Father told them to help me get a load and bed down our livestock then I could take a load to their camp. We took their load to the camp and scattered it in the wigwams and around the ponies. Many years later when I was attending the Indian Powwow at Tama, an aged Indian came up to me and shook hands, saying, 'I remember you. You're Kroh of Galesburg. You gave me straw when I camped in your timber.'"

Kroh continued, "Galesburg was quite a town years ago. They thought they were going to get a railroad and lots of money was donated, but it never came. So businesses closed and followed the path of the iron horse. The town became more and more deserted. Stage coach travel became a memory. The automobile made its debut and roads had to be surfaced for this method of transportation. Good highways and faster methods of travel made it possible for folks to go to larger towns to trade, receive higher education, find new types of entertainment and attend churches of their own choice. This is why Galesburg has changed into the sleepy little village that it now is. Why Galesburg was once the fightingest town! Take them Earps, for example. They would fight at the drop of a hat. But boys had to be able and willing to take their own part. A farm boy always got into town to do his trading but he had to fight his way out. There was no gun slingin' though. Just fist fightin'! The old man smiled as he remembered bygone days when boys and young men had to prove themselves, not only by ability to withstand hardship, but also by the strength of sinewed muscles. Truly Galesburg was an old time frontier town, crushed by the mighty wheels of progress.

GODDARD

Pearl Haley Patrick

All that remains of Goddard, Iowa, is the lower half of the Goddard store, a brick building now remodeled in stucco.

Even Watt Lake is no more. Once the end of it was spanned by the "biggest bridge in Jasper County, with abutments 110 feet." Once gay skaters made much use of it.

Once though it was a shallow, marshy lake, usually more mud than water, a pioneer drowned in it. The water was "up" that day when Charles Watt was taking a yoke of oxen across to trade for a team of horses.

His descendents still live in the vicinity.

When Indian Creek, which fed the lake, changed course, it swished through the lake, draining it effectively. Now the tree-lined creek flows through rich fields and the old creek bed is as deserted as Goddard, lost in pastures and cornfields.

In 1902 a business man named Hamilton Browne dreamed up the Newton and Northwestern Railroad to run from Newton to Rockwell City and connect with several lines enroute. He promoted it vigorously and induced eastern capital to invest \$2,500,000 in the line.

Born in New York but raised in Des Moines, he had succeeded in the steamship business in the South, coal business in Iowa, and had an interest in several rail lines.

Many people, as did Lawrence Hammerly who remembers the Road in its heyday, considered it a subsidiary of the Great Western but Hamilton Browne, in a newspaper interview, declared it was independent.

By March 2nd, 1904 the work was "being pushed to complete road as planned, this summer."

March 9 the first train came through, "a work train that brought a huge turn-table (to Newton) was unloaded and will be put in place at an early date."

By March an impatient editor was asking, "When will a train be making schedule time on the N & NW?" A July date was promised.

Goddard was never a populous place. In fact only three homes were built on the town plat; the O.A. Wheelers, the Harry Cordrays, the Pittcocks, three brothers sometimes called Pitt.

W. E. Holtz, writing from Corvallis, Oregon, more than fifty years later, records "William Herbold, Sr. laid out the plat and erected buildings in the summer and fall of 1905. I opened a store there in December which I operated until August 1907 when I moved to Nebraska. My family lived upstairs over the store."

Holtz was also postmaster and local papers announced money orders available there.

Much grain came to the elevator; coal business was brisk; it was a shipping point for farmers and stockmen.

A Goddard item in the Newton Herald of January 18, 1907, tells us "Campbell Brothers shipped four cars of cattle; Lu Herbold one car cattle; O.A. Herbold, a car of hogs from here, Sunday."

James Leonard recalls seeing a whole trainload of cattle shipped out.

Goddard was not limited to the few homes in the town; farm folks from miles around claimed it as their own.

Mrs. P. R. Pink recalls what a convenience it was to be able to send a child horseback to the nearby store rather than wait until Saturday for the team to go to Colfax.

Farmers, along with the buyers, used the elevator, shipped over the railroad, hauled coal from the coal yard and traded at "the big store."

Old timers still recall the hustle and bustle and excitement connected with building the railroad.

William Aillaud, then a boy, remembers going to a work camp near Metz to hear "the foreigners" sing, evenings after their work was done. He thought they were Italians but Harry Selbher, also a youth at the time, and who worked part time with the gang, says they were from Austri-Hungary and Bohemia. He was shown the books they used to study English.

Mrs. Hadsell, (Mary Wheeler) recalls hearing them trying to make her puzzled mother understand they wanted to buy milk and tomatoes.

Art Beals recalls his first job which was driving the mule raising the brick for the walls of the store building. Saving his wages he accumulated \$7.50 and bought a watch that gave him several years' service.

Charlie Pierce recalls another camp, one of tents along the line near the new townsite. The workmen were using some fifty teams with plows and scrapers to move dirt. Some men had their families with them.

A windstorm blew down the tents and drenched the occupants. The women, children and the sick found shelter in the Pierce family residence, unoccupied at the time. They lived there until the camp could be restored.

Charlie Pierce also recalled a big Swede foreman named Goddard, who took cold on the job, developed pneumonia and was taken to a Des Moines hospital. Before he died he asked that the new town be named for him.

The general belief has been that Goddard was named for an official "back East" but Pierce is sure that this is the true story of how Goddard got its name. He also has the deed of the right-of-way land he bought back from the rail-road when it went out of business. The deed is dated July 16, 1914.

The twenty-five acres platted from the Herbold farm was never all used as a townsite and in ten years was all back in the hands of farmers and the little depot moved into a field as an implement shed.

Why?

No satisfactory explanation was even given but surmises were many. Coal ceased to be big business. Competing lines wrecked the railroad. Better roads and the coming of motors enabled farmers to go farther to shop. Some scalawags made off with the profits. Some poor suckers lost all they put in---

But the truth, who knows?

But for most of the ten years Goddard was a lively place.

Mrs. R. A. Poage remembers visiting it when it was humming.

The coal and lumber yard was a branch of the Jasper County Lumber Company. Arthur Watt recalls that Herbold put in a set of scales for the buyers and public to use.

During most of the life of the N & NW people talked about electrifying the railroad. That was never done.

There were few dull times during the life of Goddard. Picnics, ice cream socials, buggy rides in summer, skating in winter, parties, sleigh rides, oyster suppers; church services in Sandhill schoolhouse. An attendance of 150 is noted at a Sunday School picnic of 1906. Some picnics took place at "Slaughter's old cold bank." The Newton Herald of February 1, 1907 reports from Goddard; "Last evening a merry crowd of young people rushed up the stairs at the Goddard store to surprise Miss Beryl Holtz in honor of her birthday---the evening passed quickly with games and music and taffy pulling."

In the same issue we are told "a large crowd gathered at the store to see the wrestling match between Carl Couch and Harry Selbbers, both being light weights. The match was three throws out of five. It was a very even tussle for a while but Selbbers won."

In notes from Poweshiek Township the Newton Journal tells us "The Couch Hill and Goddard baseball teams played at Goddard last Sunday with a score of 11 to 4 in favor of the Hill boys!"

Ball games were played in Pink's pasture.

Contests were not unknown in Goddard and thereabouts. A Mrs. Rob Robertson is reported in February 1906 as successful in a word contest conducted by Kimball Organ Co. She won \$92.40.

Almost half a century has passed since the last train puffed through Goddard; since the Post Office took down the flag; since the elevator, the coal and lumber yard, the stock yards and the general store closed, yet Goddard is not just a ghost town.

Every year there is a picnic, a Goddard Home-coming, in the remodeled and cozy clubhouse of the Grange.

Around such a feast as only the Midwest can boast, gather the old timers; they and their children and their grand children, and great grandchildren.

The young folks bring musical instruments and the old store echoes with greetings, inquiries about absent ones--and memories. Fifty years is a long time to remember.

The Homecoming is not the only event. Often when an old resident, as the former Ona Wray (now Mrs. Lenartz), comes to town, another get-together feast is spread.

Truly Goddard is more than just a ghost town; another ghost town among many ghost towns.

Goddard is gone, yes, but not forgotten.

GHOST TOWNS OF JASPER COUNTY

<u>TOWN</u>	<u>SECTION</u>	<u>TOWNSHIP</u>
Greencastle	14	Poweshie
Morristown	5	Poweshie
Oswalt	33	Poweshie
Valeria	11	Poweshie
St. Thomas	35	Poweshie
Draper	33 34	Fairview
Fairmount	9 10 16 15	Fairview
Monroe City	3 2 10 11	Fairview
Clyde	11	Clear Creek
Palmyra	22	Clear Creek
Amboy	21	Kellogg
Rushville	9	Kellogg
Metz	11	Mound Prairie
Severs	17	Mound Prairie
Murphy	17	Buena Vista
Vandalia	7	Des Moines
Galesburg	16	Elk Creek
Old Baxter	16 21 22	Independence
Horn	23	Malaka
Old Wittemberg	3	Newton
Turner	34	Rock Creek
Goddard	29	Sherman
Prairie Belle	32	Washington

MAP OF JASPER COUNTY

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GREENCASTLE

Catherine Poage

One of the most ghostly of all the ghost towns in Jasper County is the obsolete town of Greencastle. Perhaps this is because it was one of the very first villages to be established in that part of the county which lies north of the Skunk River.

Since all men in primitive lands everywhere settle where nature provides the facilities that are necessary for existence, this had been a favorite location of an Indian Camp. Poweshiek the good Fox Indian chieftain, had made it his choice. The camp was located on both sides of Indian Creek and included the wooded hills near by. At this point the creek was easily forded and was large enough to furnish water for their use even in dry seasons.

The camp was vacated in the latter part of the year 1842 or possibly in the early part of 1844 after the treaty with the Sac and Fox Indians had been made, giving the U.S. Government this entire section of Iowa.

It was not quite three years after the smoke from the Indian wigwams had died out in the air that the first white settler came to the vicinity.

Land in that part of the county was much of it heavily timbered and the soil of the finest quality, and since all early settlers must have shelter, water and fuel, this type of topography was chosen in preference to the prairie lands.

The first white man to locate here was Joseph Slaughter who came in 1846.

It was not long until a number of other tracts of land were taken up. Records show that in less than a year Slaughter's school was established.

In 1847 the region became officially Poweshiek Township, so named in honor of the Chieftain who had lived in the area previously.

The town of Greencastle, located in Sec. 14 of Poweshiek Township, was platted by Albert Shipp on August 20, 1855. It was quite a pretentious plat consisting of a central square surrounded by rows of lots located up and down the roadways in all directions.

There had been a roadway running north and south along the east side of the square, also one from the west forming a "T" at the southeast corner thereof. Almost immediately a number of lots were sold.

The Methodist Church Society was very early in the field and built a neat church building, also a parsonage for the early circuit riders who served the local church and traveled to other communities with their religious work.

In 1855 and 1856 there was a great rush of immigration and new settlers poured into the region in and around the town. Very soon a movement was made to erect another school as the

nearby Slaughter school was not sufficient. An exceptionally good building was completed in 1857. This was a two story building with entrance halls and an imposing cupola containing a bell.

James R. Poage was one of the first two teachers to be employed in this new school house.

We find a record in one of our historical collections that a very successful Fourth of July celebration was held in Greencastle in 1859. "The throng assembled at the schoolhouse, formed a procession and marched to the music of the "Greencastle String Band" to the western part of the village where seats had been erected in a large grove." George Baker acted as chairman of the program. Rev. Carr, Rev. Murray and E. M. H. Fleming were named on the forenoon portion of the program and after the picnic dinner H.S. Winslow and Rev. Shaffer gave addresses.

It would be interesting to know which of the ministers mentioned was resident of the town.

The village had continued to grow rapidly from the first. Quoting from a letter published in the "Newton Journal" many years ago we find "Mr. Hugh Pease" came to Iowa with his parents who located on the edge of Greencastle in 1856. At that time he was fourteen years of age and relates that they traded there and recalls that "Joseph Moses was one of the two leading merchants.

We also find the statement that during the year 1859 there were fifteen new buildings erected in the town.

The first doctor to locate in Greencastle was a Dr. J.H. Knox who came about 1865 or '66 but other than the fact that he was a homeopathic doctor no other mention of him can be found. He probably remained in the town because in the March 1st, 1867 issue of the Newton Journal we find this item among the Greencastle News, "We have five doctors in town and more coming soon."

This statement probably referred to the coming of Dr. W.W. Hawk from Mahaska County as he located there at or near that date. He became the best known and most outstanding physician in that region. He had an extensive practice with patients in Polk and Story counties as well as Jasper.

He raised a fine family and one of his sons, Dr. J. W. Hawk followed in his father's footsteps and became a well known physician and surgeon. He located for a short time in Colfax and later for many years was employed by the Union Pacific Railroad. His wife, a daughter of the Gardner family living in or near Greencastle, was also a physician and worked with her husband.

Another item appearing in the March 1st, 1877 issue of the Newton Journal states that "the Rev. Mr. King commenced holding revival meetings in the Evangelical Church of Greencastle about the first of December, in which all of the Christian people joined, irrespective of denominational preference. The work was carried on for over two months resulting in the

conversion of over sixty persons. Also, an item stating that the two teachers, Miss Devore and Miss Anderson, were doing fine work in the school and that three of their pupils had received certificates for teaching.

All during the 70's the town grew and prospered. In 1875 there was a large steam flour mill erected there by the firm of Fischer and Pfeiffer at a cost of \$10,000. This mill did a thriving business and had a capacity of one hundred barrels of flour a day. During the year of 1877 mention was made that despite the scarcity of wheat the mill had a good business. The item also stated that Ben Fischer was in charge and that "no mill in the country could boast better machinery."

Just the date at which F. R. Witmer became one of the town's leading merchants was difficult to establish but it was very early and he may have been one of the two merchants mentioned by Hugh Pease in his letter recording his boyhood memories, but it is a well known fact that he was an active business man there all during the life of the town. In another issue of the Newton Journal during 1877, this statement was made, "Witmer and Marsh are doing a big business carrying a large stock of goods--dry goods--drugs, groceries and farm utensils." Then just one month later we find that they evidently had a new competitor when "Tess Rumbaugh" opened a new store on the west side of the square, "A general store."

At or near that time the local blacksmith was "building a new mammoth blacksmith shop." He was mentioned in connection with an assistant as "Robt. McClaren and Mr. Cross" and stated that "he is a good smith."

At one time in 1878 we find that a Newton merchant W. F. Cozad, came over to Greencastle and held an auction for some time to dispose of his stock of goods.

During the last eight or ten years of the life of that town there were two church buildings, the Evangelical and the Methodist. Of the two, the Methodist was by far the more active and outstanding. For many years the pastors of that group lived in the parsonage and not only served that church locally, but went out to preach in school houses or in homes wherever they could reach others in a religious way.

It so happened that I knew many of them personally during my childhood and girlhood. In the year 1876 and '77 a pastor named Wooten served there. A few years later Rev. Durfee was located there and I believe that the last pastor to occupy that parsonage was Rev. Lampman who still lived there at the time when the town was dying.

I am indebted to Mrs. O.H. Witmer who gave me information regarding the later years of the town. She was the former Nellie Hawk, daughter of Dr. W.W. Hark, and she remembered especially Mrs. Durfee, the pastor's wife, who was a musician and gave her her first music lesson. A little later when the pastor and his wife left the town and there was no longer an organist in the parsonage, Nellie Hawk began to play the organ for church services. She was only eleven years old and continued to serve as organist when later they moved to Mingo.

Greencastle was an active, energetic part of Jasper County for years and its people religiously and culturally inclined. There are a number of recorded instances bearing out this statement. On one occasion the Sunday School gave a concert for which a teacher and conductor, one Prof. Condo from Des Moines, was employed.

One of the nearby farm families who were influential in the activities of the town was the Gardner family. One of the Gardner boys, Archibald, became a rather famous judge, another one, John, was a professor, and the daughter, a physician, already mentioned, who became the wife of Dr. J. W. Hawk.

The post office was established in 1857 and continued to operate until in 1900.

But the town was doomed to extinction when the Great Western Railroad came through that corner of Jasper County in 1883. Greencastle was bypassed. A depot, located a little less than two miles away, became the nucleus for the town of Mingo.

In a very short time, almost all of the Greencastle business places were either moved over to Mingo or abandoned.

F. R. Witmer became Mingo's first banker.

Greencastle has been gone for over sixty years and scarcely a trace is left to give evidence that it ever existed. A well-kept cemetery and one or two small houses nearby is all that is left.

But it lived a healthy and vigorous life for over twenty-five years, then died a victim of malnutrition and so called progress.

But its ghost still walks and some day not too far distant the town that supplanted it will no doubt be absorbed by change and so called progress and perhaps become another ghost.

HORN

Jean Gleaves Poage

Malaka Township, almost exclusively prairie land, has had to rely on Newton and neighboring towns for railroad and other market accommodations. Malaka can not boast of a town--not even a ghost town.

However, in Section 23 the Horn post office existed from 1869 to 1889 and within a radius of one mile came the Harris and Co. Creamery, Harper's Mill, and two churches. St. John's Evangelical Reformed established in 1862, and Zoar Evangelical Reformed in 1893. Both of which are now United Church of Christ in denomination.

The comfortable farm home of William Eilert located on Highway 14, one and a half mile east of its junction with Highway 223, one housed the Horn Post Office. The house, now remodelled, had an east entrance or porch so that folks could reach from the outside into pigeon holes for their mail without going inside the house.

The land which came to include the post office site has been issued by the Patent Office on June 11, 1854 to Harvey Skiff. That same year it became the property of William Bohne. In 1856 the David Goodhues with their family from Marengo, Iowa but formerly from Grafton County, New Hampshire came into possession.

In Weaver's Jasper County History Vol. I 554-7, a son Edward Payson Goodhue describes the journey and the new home as they found it.

"We came to Jasper County in a lumber wagon, drawn by four oxen. Attached to the end of the wagon was a hand-cart of my own making, filled with trinkets and "Yankee notions" from the East. We had sold our livestock and took with us only the oxen, one bay stallion, a small drove of sheep, a coop of chickens and our little black dog to bring up the river. We frequently stuck in the mud, for the sloughs were not bridged, but they managed to pull through by doubling with some mover who chanced to come by in an opportune time, or who were also stuck in the deep mire; so on the evening of the third day we landed at the North Skunk river. There my father bought one hundred and ninety-five acres of choice land, of which twenty-five acres had been broken and fenced, and upon which a home had been started and left partly finished.

The land was well watered and on it stood a fine grove of timber, which was quite an item, for the country was principally prairie and so far as the early settlers knew, there was no coal in the state, nor railroad to furnish them with building material. Some of black walnut was cut and sawed at John Cary's mill, and in the fall after it was seasoned, my father purchased for me a set of tools and I was put to work finishing the house. After making the panel doors there was enough lumber left to make my mother a light stand, and a leaf-table and cupboard. I still retain the latter as a true specimen of what a boy can do with "Yankee gumption" at the age of seventeen years. The country was new and needed to be developed. I had little time for books or sport. I never owned a gun and I never killed a rabbit or song-bird. I got enough pleasure out of tools which I took to readily. I made barrels, churns, trays, boots, shoes, sleds, spoke-wheels and many other things."

David Goodhue was a man of integrity, energetic and temperate having no use for "tobacco, whiskey, or profanity." He took an active part in organizing Malaka Township (1857) and acted as clerk at its first meeting. On April 24, 1868 he was commissioned by A. W. Randall, postmaster general as the first postmaster at Horn and held the office for eleven years. In 1879 the son, Edward Payson was commissioned by Postmaster General D. M. Key to succeed his father. He served nine years.

Edward, too, was community-minded. At twenty-one he was elected road boss. His district ran the length of the township and once after spending the tax money bridging the sloughs, he donated twenty-one days grading the bank and reconstructing the first bridge across the North Skunk river. He is reputed to have held every office but constable in Malaka Township.

By 1900 Edward Goodhue's health was failing and the post office was moved to the August Toedt home one mile south.

In the annals of Northwest Jasper County, Harper's Mill three quarters of a mile south and one-half mile west of the Horn post office is mentioned often. While corn dodger was the staff of life to the early pioneers, wheat flour was a precious supplement. Trips to mills may have been adventuresome, but they could be arduous. Roads were but faint scars through prairie grass the height of a man's shoulder, with oxen that never hurried. It took days to make the trip to Brighton's Mill in Van Buren County, to Iowa City, or to Duncan's Mill at Oskaloosa. Even when a man reached the mill with his grain, there might be other men ahead of him, and he must wait his turn.

When the Sparks Mill opened at Lynnvile in 1846, and Donner's Mill at Newton in 1850, Malaka people were greatly relieved. Sometime after this came Harper's Mill.

It is said that J. W. Harper came to Jasper County in 1864 with only ten cents in his pocket. By '78 he had a flour mill costing \$6,000 at the junction of Snipe Creek and North Skunk River, a good residence, and fifteen acres of land along Snipe Creek. One Theophilus Mansfield served as miller for a time. Harper's Mill prospered for a time. Many homes had flour chests to hold a year's supply. Harper was paid in flour which he stored in three hundred pound barrels, and later shipped to the east. The mill was operated by a turbine, but the water supply being inadequate for all seasons the business was forced to close. The structure was torn down and moved to Kellogg about 1889.

Old timers recall a creamery one-half mile south of Horn Post Office and diagonally across from St. John's cemetery and operated by a Howard Harris. It had been moved from the northwest corner of the Korte farm one quarter mile east and a quarter south.

Sometime after 1894 the creamery was taken over by Harris and Co. located in Baxter in the hollow west of the schoolhouse. The company owned a creamery at Ira, also. By 1904 the three creameries were producing 10,000 pounds of butter per week.

Marketing livestock and grains was a constant problem for Horn settlers. Rumors of coming railroads through the settlement came periodically. The August 1, 1878 issue of the Newton Journal told of a proposed new railroad between Newton and Marshalltown. Prominent Marshalltown citizens were anxious to reach out to Jasper County coal mines of which there were twenty-eight of promise, and to extend the line to Waterloo and thereby connect with the McGregor road.

Newton and Malaka Township both held mass meetings on August 3. Of the Malaka meeting, the Newton Journal reports,

"...After informal remarks by E.P. Goodhue, Esquire, Mr. Eichner, and A. J. Logan, Adam Butler was called to the chair, and Mrs. N. Sanford made secretary. the following committee was to meet with the Marshalltown committee.

C. Preston	Hon. John Beatty
E. P. Goodhue	Jesse Wing
Hezekiah Parsons	Henry Worman
M. S. Kinyon	Henry Harland
W. J. Harper	Henry Korf."

At what point the scheme fell through we do not know. Needless to say, no railroad resulted.

In 1884 excitement ran high again. In the April 10 issue of the Newton Journal appeared this item.

"The surveyors have been surveying in Malaka Township for the Iowa and Dakota Northwestern Railroad which is to strike the great wheat belts of Dakota. Baxter will be the junction."

Nothing came of this and the Horn people had to content themselves with the Chicago Great Western running through Baxter and the Chicago Rock Island through Newton.

METZ

Mable Soderblom

William Hitchler and his brother, the first settlers of Metz, had formerly served on a transport from London to New York. They were divers, underwater ship repairers. This was very dangerous work as sharks would often cut the hose and the divers would die. Their only weapon was spears which they used to keep the sharks away. William Hitchler met his wife, an Englishwoman, in New York while stopping there between trips.

In the year 1852, Hitchler and his wife bought and homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres of land in section 11 of Mound Prairie township, Jasper County, paying \$1.25 an acre. Here they built a big log cabin, then later a new house. The train set fire to the prairie and burned his home. Although they plowed around the house, the fire jumped the plowed ground and they were unable to stop it.

Farmers who had settled in this locality needed a market for their produce so they purchased land from Hitchler and started a town which they called Farmersville. A stage coach came through Farmersville to Newton. The wheel tracks of the old stage coach road can still be seen in some grassy spots.

Later, the Rock Island Railroad came through the little village. Here, the farmers could bring their grain and ship it. In 1911, the Northwestern Railroad came but it was always late so they nicknamed it "Hind Windy." According to Hitchler, a man named Lyons operated the first depot. In this depot was to be found the only telephone which was switched in from Newton.

D. J. Eberhart operated the first elevator in Metz, as it was later known, Mr. Hitchler having renamed the town after Metz, Germany. Peter Early started the first store, selling it later to Melvin Miller who again sold it to Jesse Clement. Peter Early then built a big variety store which was located west of the original one. At one time there were two stores, a barber shop, blacksmith shop, elevator, depot and several dwelling houses. The cooperative creamery on the corner made butter and cheese from cream brought in by the farmers. Metz also had a doctor, a lady named May Lyons. Railroad section houses were built in Metz when the section helpers came there to live. These men were paid one dollar a day. In fact, any kind of help could be hired for one dollar per day. Henry Hitchler stated that a day's wages would buy one sack of flour, (50 pounds).

Another early settler of Metz, Mrs. Hilma Dammeier, was daughter of S.P. Lind who came to Metz from Sweden in 1880. She says the Rock Island train on which they came did not stop at Metz unless a passenger indicated that he wished to get off there. Since the Linds could not speak the English language they could not make their wishes known. However, there was a Swedish minister on the train who noticed their dilemma and helped them. Mr. Lind found work with his wife's cousin a section foreman who lived in Metz. Lind first built a home in the village then later located on a small farm about one-half mile west. Here they lived in primitive pioneer fashion, drawing their water from a well via rope and bucket. They kept two cows, raised their own fruit and vegetables and gathered nuts in the timber each Fall.

The Reed schoolhouse stood on a hill east of Metz but was later relocated north of the town. Teachers whom Mrs. Dammeier remembers best were Peter Beck, Ed. Smart, Blackwood and Lula Kolhoefer. They had two terms of school during the year, each term lasting only three months.

Some of the first church services were held in the schoolhouse. Here a Baptist minister named Newton T. Thomas served. Mrs. Dammeier also remembered a Rev. Price who held occasional evening services in the school. Since there was no organ the minister led the singing. Sunday School was held each Sunday morning. Opening exercises consisted of singing such gospel hymns as "Nearer My God to Thee", "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and others. After opening exercises the people divided into groups according to age. All Sunday School classes were taught in this one room which had only four rows of seats. They had quarterlies and leaflets from which to read the lesson. Children were given small cards containing a Bible verse and picture. After receiving five such cards they were given a

larger one. Mrs. Dammeier remembers William Hitchler attending this Sabbath School and always sitting on the south side. However, this school soon became too crowded for the church services so in 1911 a protestant community church was built on the hill north of Metz. The plot of ground was deeded from the Hitchler farm. This church is still in use, having been remodeled and made modern. The old school house which had served as both church and school was again moved on July 16, 1960.

Homes in Metz were heated by coal which they got from a mine about one and one half miles away. The local people went to the mine where a coal miner weighed and sold coal to them by the bushel. No coal was shipped out from there.

Indians camped near the river during the winter. Brightly garbed squaws, a papoose strapped to the back, came to beg food for which they offered strings of beads. The braves used guns to do their hunting. They tanned the animal hides to make their clothing. Metz citizens found these Indians to be friendly.

Entertainment consisted of bobsled rides down the schoolhouse hill, barn dances, box suppers and Fourth of July celebrations. The latter began with picnic dinners near the schoolhouse, then a parade, followed by foot races, horse races, fireworks and other entertainment down by the river. At Christmas there was always a program and a tree. The tree was trimmed with strings of popcorn, home-made flowers and candles of many colors. A man with a long pole watched the lighted candles constantly to see that neither the pine needles nor the trimming caught fire. The people brought their gifts and placed them under the tree, then two from the group were chosen to read the names of the recipients.

There is no trace of any business buildings left in Metz. It is just a farm community with a church in its midst. One can only suppose that the town's decline began with the end of the horse and buggy era.

MONROE CITY

Clarice McGriff Hoagland

Though it never materialized to become, in turn, a ghost town, the proposed Iowa capital at Monroe City seemed a very real and promising dream for a time.

The territorial capital had been located at Burlington, then moved to Iowa City in 1841. During the first session of the Iowa State Legislature, the State Treasurer reported the uncompleted Capital building at Iowa City to be in a very unprotected condition, vulnerable to storm damage and expressed the hope that the legislature would make some provision to complete it, at least enough to protect it from the ravages of weather. The General Assembly voted the sum of \$2500.00 for the completion of the public buildings. By this time, the ques-

tion of the western boundary of Iowa had been settled and as the people moved westward across the state, a discussion grew in regard to selecting a new site for the capital, one which would be more centrally located. At the present time, "Old Capitol" building and the grounds comprise a part of the campus of the University of Iowa, having been granted to the newly created university, when abandoned for the newer site.

A commission was appointed and in September of 1841, a site was selected which included four sections and two half sections of land some fifteen miles south of Newton in Jasper County; two of these sections are located in what is now Des Moines Township and the others in Fairview Township. These lands were situated between Prairie City and Monroe on the Keokuk and Des Moines Railroad, now the Rock Island Line, which runs diagonally through them. A legal description would describe the general area as being in Township 78 North, Range 20, West of the 5th P.M. in Jasper County, Iowa.

In order to finance such a venture, it was the usual procedure to sell lots in the tracts granted by Congress for new state capitol sites. Thus, the five square mile area was plotted and in a few weeks 425 lots were auctioned off. The cash payment, one-fourth, yielded \$1,797.43; while the expenses of the sale and the claim of the commissioners for services exceeded this amount by \$409.14. When the report had been read and was under consideration, an indignant member of the House of Representatives moved to refer the report to a select committee of five, with instructions to report how much of said city of Monroe was under water and how much was burned up. An investigation resulted in a vote by the second state assembly to repeal the selection and all plans were abandoned for Monroe City. With the exception of two schemers, who were members of the commission and who had purchased fifty-two of the lots, all persons who had purchased the lots had their money refunded.

No determination can be made as to the exact spot upon which construction was to have been made; speculation provides two locations, the one being on the farm presently owned by Leona Nearmyer and the other the land just north of where the Capital Prairie Schoolhouse once stood. Monroe City existed on paper only; its plat, even, was never recorded. No cabin, residence, business block or State building was ever erected within its limits and by the spring of 1850, it is said, prairie fires had burned the stakes that had marked its streets and alleys. Prairie grasses sprouted and withered where the State House and Governor's mansion were to have stood and the breaking plow has long since turned the sod many times.

MURPHY

Opal M. Snyder

General James B. Weaver's history of Jasper County lists "Murphy" as a village. But this small section of land two miles

southeast of the County Home, is more fondly remembered as the "Murphy Neighborhood", named after the owner of its only business enterprise, "Uncle John Murphy."

Uncle John Wildman Murphy came to this section of Iowa from Ohio about 1852 to look over farming and business prospects. In 1847 he married John William Russell's sister and they had eight children, five boys and three girls. Two boys died in infancy.

Mr. Murray Russell's grandfather settled here in 1861 and the Russells, Murphys, Starrets and Squires were some of the early pioneers who settled this section. This community was well organized even before the Mormon trip west, which was right past some of the old homes, just back of our old school house, the old Slagel cemetery, and north of the County Home and on west.

Uncle John Murphy's store was the social and the business center of this little community. There were two or three houses around it, and the barn Uncle John built in 1870 is still standing.

The Buena Vista Grange was started here in 1870. The first meeting was held in the barn and has met continuously since that date. One of our Newton residents, Mrs. Lola Murphy Wilson was a babe in arms at the time the Grange was organized. It is interesting to note Mr. Loren Murphy, present State Master since 1955, has followed the interests of Uncle John, who was a State Grange officer.

Uncle John was a tall man, standing six foot, one or two, almost white hair, brown eyed and fair complexioned. He had the rare gift of persuading those who disagreed with him to see his point of view without resorting to rudeness or violence. He loaned a helping hand to those in need, and old records show some accounts at the store were never paid. A deeply religious man, Uncle John was interested in the Hixon Grove Methodist Church, named after the Hixon family who donated the land.

It seems strange that Mr. Murphy was of the Methodist faith as most of us automatically connect the Irish name with the Roman Catholic brotherhood, but some of the northern counties of Ireland were Protestant.

Uncle John died in his 80's, "tending the Lord's store" at a Methodist conference in Farrar, Iowa.

The railroad ran near the store and was called the Iowa Central, then owned by the Minneapolis and St. Paul, and no part of the Northwestern Line. In the early days of the settlement, people would bring their eggs and milk into Murphy and ride into Newton to shop, returning the same day.

Uncle John's store boasted a post office, which his brother tended, and it handled three deliveries a day. One year the post office did only \$40.00 worth of business and the government discontinued its operation in 1911.

After Uncle John died the store was owned at one time by Judge Fleck's father, Senator D. S. Fleck. Around 1926 the store could no longer qualify for insurance and it was torn down.

While Uncle John's store was the pivot of business life in the Murphy Neighborhood, the Murphy Band was known throughout the state as one of the finest bands in Central Iowa. Mr. Charles Starrett of Newton played in the band for many years and Bert Squires was one of its directors. In those days there were no high school bands and women did not play. The Murphy Silver Cornet Band, as it was known at that time, was started around 1880, was disbanded, then re-organized. There were about twenty-five members, each bought his own instrument, but uniforms were purchased from proceeds from playing engagements. The band played for the county fair, most of the lodges, and always on Memorial Day. The band broke up in 1922 but a "Murphy Band" re-union is held the last Sunday in August each year in Buena Vista Township at Adamson Grove School.

Recently I asked my neighbor, Mrs. Edith Hedges Verwers, who was raised in the Murphy Neighborhood, what was left of the little community. "Nothing," she said, "just a place in the road."

Yes, the Murphy Bank is gone, the store is gone, Uncle John is gone and indeed Murphy is "just a place in the road"... but men such as Uncle John need no monument to their memory... for such as he first touched plow to virgin soil...were firm in their faith...and we inherit the harvest.

OLD BAXTER

Jean Gleaves Poage

In the center of Independence Township one mile west of the Baxter Cemetery is a ghost town - Old Baxter. No one knows when the once thriving village began, but a few old timers remember the business houses, the school, and the dwellings. The countryside is rich in homespun lore.

Probably no other has felt the throbbing pulse of the community more than Mrs. Janet Galloway Allan (Mrs. John). On March 23, 1961, "Grandma Allan" celebrated her eighty-second birthday. Sitting in her chair by the window she looks south across the hills to this ghost town. A few years ago the Old Baxter schoolhouse was converted into a dwelling. That and the old corner remain to remind her of the village.

I was six years old when our family came to America. Father had been a game keeper on a large estate in Fife-shire, Scotland. I 'mind' well the large house, the brick floors, and the kennels for the two dozen or more dogs that Father trained for hunting rabbits, foxes, wild boars. He also taught the 'gentlemen' how to shoot and care for their guns. Turning animals loose from the preserves and chasing them was great sport.

But Father wanted to farm for himself, and when my Aunt Marget and Uncle Jimmie Williamson returned on a visit in 1881 after having lived in the United States for twenty-

five years--on the farm adjoining us to the east--he and my brother, Arch Galloway, came over. They liked it and the next spring sent for Mother, myself, and my sister Agnes, Isobel and her husband Robert Johnston, and Elizabeth and her husband, George Meikeljohn, and their baby daughter Janet.

We left Glasgow for Philadelphia arriving May 16, 1885. We came by train to Newton, and then a man called 'Popcorn' Davis--for why he was 'Popcorn' I'll never know--drove us to Aung Marget's, west of Baxter in a lumber wagon drawn by a team of mules. We had no sooner arrived than we all had to scrub ourselves from head to toe that 'nae beastie' from the steerage remained on us.

We lived on farms in the Baxter-Clyde area including ten years on the farm now owned by Lynn Meckley. A Scotch settlement was springing up. There were the Engles, Davidsons, McKenzies, Caulfields, Williamsons, Allans, Donaldsons, and others, mostly farmers.

Grandma Allan attended Independence No. 5 which came to be called the Old Baxter School. For a description of that building, we may read from the August eleventh, 1870 issue of the Newton Free Press, the following:

INDEPENDENCE CENTER

Erected in 1870

While making a short trip in the country a few days since, we saw the above inscription high on the front of a school house in Independence Township. The house is located as indicated above, and is surrounded by a large yard of one acre. It is seldom we see a rural school house as spacious and neatly finished.

The structure is twenty-eight feet wide and thirty-six feet long; thirteen feet between doors, painted white outside, oakgrained inside, with an anteroom of five feet, and a coal house joined to the rear; all neatly executed, and seated with improved seats at a cost of \$1,440.00. We are told by those better informed in this particular, that it is the best single school room in the county, and of rural districts that Independence Township has the banner school house.

For the execution of the plan, its early completion and economical management, the district is almost wholly indebted to Salem Jeffries, Esq. whose time and energy has been largely devoted to this worthy enterprise.

Miss Lucy Hall further describes the building in HISTORY OF THE SCHOOLS IN JASPER COUNTY, IOWA, page 17:

Our older Baxter residents tell us that the first building known as "Old Baxter" was built in 1870 on the same site as now, west of town.... There was an extra little building attached to the east side which was the coal

house. The windows as in most of those early buildings, were on the north and south sides, thus directly opposite each other. The building was heated by two stoves--one in the east end and one in the west. There were two long benches, rudely constructed and plain, rough slabs with the back side down. One of these was on the north side of the room and one on the south. These benches were used for class work and on rainy or snowy days, they were pulled up to the stoves and used as a place to dry the mittens, coats, etc. of the pupils.

The blackboard on the east end was just a painted wall but that on the west was real slate. There were also two small ones on the side walls between the windows. Tradition says that Guy Lane's grandfather gave the land for the school. The door of that first school house had wooden hinges and a wooden latch. One lady says, "Those blessed benches on which we sat! how our backs ached and how hard it was for the little people to balance themselves on them all day long, feet swinging and no back on which to lean." No effort in those days to fit the seat to the child. The largest enrollment in this school was one winter term when there were between sixty and sixty-five enrolled.

That must have been the time when Grandma Allan recalled for she said,

I remember when there were sixty-five of us enrolled, and some of the boys were big and old, too. Why, there was Henry Klein, twenty-four years old. You know, we figured there were always one to six Allans attending that school every year from 1875 to 1953. That's when my granddaughter Margaret, (Mrs. Gary Gullet) finished the eighth grade.

The school became an educational and religious center. Literary Societies and Singing Schools met frequently. Sunday Schools were conducted on Sunday afternoons. Circuit Rider preachers came frequently.

Besides School No. 5, there was Seth Rose's Shoe Repair Shop, Higgins' General Store, and ---for a year or more--a store owned by Alf Davey. Again Grandma Allan:

My husband told of the shoe repair shop operated by Seth Rose. He did good work and often worked into the night. It was a hanging out place for the young fellows, too. They'd all chip in a penny or two and sit and eat peanuts all evening.

My husband really grew up with Old Baxter. He was just a little tad when he came from Scotland with his parents and five brothers and sisters in 1870. They settled on this farm and had some more little Allans. Then John and I married and lived on the same farm. Eight of my nine children were born here.

South of the school house was the Higgins store--a typical American institution where on winter days news, gossip crops and politics were discussed around the glowing red pot-bellied stove. The chunk box served as spittoon. The late Effie Williamson Gleaves remembered the Higgins store with its three rooms; the salesroom in front, storage in the middle, and living quarters in the back room. The family slept upstairs.

On the north side of the store was a counter and at the west end, a glass show case containing handkerchiefs and hair ornaments, licorice whips, sweetened paraffin for gum and candy hearts with printed messages. On the shelves were slates and slate pencils, bolts of calico for dresses, denim for jeans, and blue and white striped shirting. There were a few jackets, overalls and mittens; ready-to-wear garments were just coming in to fashion. On the South were cracker boxes, and barrels of oatmeal, flour, sorghum, and kerosene. Beneath the spigot of the sorghum barrel was a pail to catch drippings. Many a finger was known to have caressed that spigot.

The late Mrs. P. J. Cool had this to say about prices:

Well do I remember buying a ten cent steak to feed our family of eight. Usually, Sid Higgins threw in a liver and a soup bone. He could be real generous at times. Butter was ten cents a pound; sugar, ten pounds for twenty-five cents.

Higgins sold two flours--Clear Quill and Mother's Best. He also had two barrels of kerosene---one clear and the other red, which cost a few cents more per gallon, but folks were sure that originally both kerosenes came out of the same barrel.

Mrs. R. A. Poage (Catherine Tipton) tells how the little village came to be called Baxter.

The first mail came from Newton to Dawson, which was really the home of "Squire" Dawson; then somehow the name changed to Independence Center because it was near the center of the township. Delivery came once in two or three weeks.

About 1875, the government granted Sidney Baxter Higgins the right to open a post office in the back of his store. He had to give it a name. "Independence" would not do because already there was an Iowa town by that name. The same was true for "Sidney." So Higgins submitted his middle name and the government accepted. At one time William Vandike carried the mail, but later Jud Booth carried it twice a week and finally three times a week.

Mrs. Maud McIntire Wisehauer of Washington, D.C. said:

I remember how anxiously we waited for the mail coming twice a week that summer of 1881. I shall never forget

Jud's horse's hoof clickity-clackiting in the distance; growing stronger as they neared those of us waiting on the front step. President Garfield had been shot July 2. He lingered until September. Papa subscribed to a daily paper--THE INTEROCEAN--and I rose horseback to get it each mail day.

An interesting sidelight was given by the late Mrs. Mary Deppe Krampe:

I was a seamstress in the home of Reverend Elliker, pastor of the Bethany Reformed Church. Every Saturday afternoon his eldest daughters and I walked to Old Baxter for the mail that it might be in the boxes of the members when they came to church the next morning.

Sid Higgins had other interests besides the store. That he was a notary we know from abstracts and other legal papers of the time. He was also a nurseryman. THE NEWTON JOURNAL for April 5, 1877 advertised, "5,000 five-year apple trees; 25,000 four-year apple trees; 40,000 three-year apple trees." The advertisement further listed cherries, plus, grapes, etc.

Eventually the stock in the store was sold to an Edd Wright, who moved it into another building owned by Alf Davey. This building tucked in between the Higgins building and the school house had been brought over from Clyde. Later both buildings were moved to the new town.

For a description of the southwest and northwest corners of the intersection we quote from Mrs. R. A. Poage's HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH read at its Fiftieth Anniversary.

Well do I remember the sign painted on the high board front, "J.F. Klise, Drugs, Notions and Sundries." Just recently my brother reminded me that "sundries" included our McGuffy Readers, our spellers and the red bound slates with the long pencils tied to them with a string. J. F. Klise was one of the founders of the present town as well, and later became one of our county supervisors.

Another house of the town was a bias-wise from the present school grounds and situated in the corner facing south and east. Here there was a large tree and under the tree a little shop. Longfellow's poem which I had heard and later learned to read and recite was:

"Under a spreading chestnut tree the village
smithy stands
The smith a mighty man is he, with large and
sinewy hands.
And the muscles of his brawny arms are strong
as iron bands."

That poem always pictured to me Elisha Wilson, in his little shop with the sparks flying upward from his forge. And beside the shop under another great tree was a little cottage. I am sure Ola Wilson, our present town's blacksmith was born there.

One of the greatest problems in the '60s and '70s was the marketing of farm produce. Most farmers had come to Iowa with a few hogs which foraged for themselves on acorns, grass and roots. Farrowed in the spring, their ears cropped or split, the "prairie rooters" were allowed to run on free range until fall. Then claimed by their owners, they were fed during the winter and turned out again in the spring. That fall they were brought into a pen and fed corn. After a fattening period, a dozen or more farmers, horseback and on foot, drove their hogs to market. That would be wherever the railroad terminus happened to be---Davenport, Iowa City or Grinnell.

Samuel Cross in the Newton Daily Journal for March 1, 1953 remembered when a drove of seven hundred hogs were driven overland to Grinnell. The task required two days. Sometimes an ox team went ahead, but always a chuck wagon followed the outfit to pick up the cripples. It is easy for us to imagine hogs stampeding at crossings and bridges, and the owners fretting over shrinkage losses.

Eastern markets demanded more and more Iowa hogs. Farmers were finding corn more profitable than wheat, but corn required hogs. "What", they said, "was a hog but fifteen to twenty bushels of corn on four legs?" If only a railroad would come, the marketing problem would solve itself.

In the September 28, 1938 issue of the BAXTER NEW ERA Mrs. Jessie Klise Terney (Mrs. James) writes:

In the spring and summer of 1881 "Long Haired Chief" Colonel Lamphier circulated among the people of Independence Township and the original town of Old Baxter trying to persuade them to vote a tax upon their lands in order that they might have a railroad in their territory. That the Colonel was suave in his arguments is attested by the fact that the people held an election and voted a three percent tax to help construct and finance the old Diagonal Railroad from Marshalltown to Des Moines, which is now a part of the Chicago Great Western.

Nothing more was heard of this project until in the summer of 1883 when surveys were made and grading begun. By late November a construction train was put on and the Iron Horse began to weave a path leading through Independence Township and on to Des Moines.

The Old Baxter community rejoiced with the coming of the railroad, but saddened to know that the little village had been by-passed. The station would be located a good mile and a half to the east and north. "What? A station in that swamp land? those flats? mud holes! Fit only for cucks!" It was hard to believe.

Grandma Allan concludes:

Then came moving to the new site. William Vandike and his twelve-yoke ox team came to be very much in demand. The twenty-four oxen were big, strong and well trained.

They were still preferred to horses for pulling stumps, breaking sod, and moving buildings and boulders. Vandike had been using them for digging "mole ditches" in the township and surrounding area--ditches which were thought to be valuable in draining off excess water. In a few weeks, all the buildings but the school house had been moved. Only it and the scars of vanished shops, stores and residences remained. The name went along too. But the ghost, still claiming ownership, continues as OLD BAXTER.

1698533

OLD WITTEMBERG TOWN

John E. Soderblom

Witteberg was first settled in 1853. It was located in Newton Township in the east half of section 3, township 80, range 19.

When the first farms were settled in Witteberg, the population of Jasper County was still small. The few remaining Indians, Sacks and Foxes, had been tamed by the Black Hawk War twenty-one years earlier.

When John P. Beatty left Ohio for the West he intended going much farther than Iowa. However, a chance meeting led him to Witteberg. Among other first settlers were Richard Sherer and Rev. Thomas Merrill. Both men came to Iowa from southwestern Ohio. In their former homes they had been members of the Free Presbyterian Church, a denomination that had separated itself from the Presbyterian Church in order that it might openly oppose the institution of slavery.

According to John P. Beatty, the first Sunday that Rev. Merrill was in the neighborhood he called the few neighbors together and organized a Sunday School.

The shadow of slavery was upon the country when Witteberg was organized. The Civil War lay just ahead. It is said that Merrill and Sherer were engaged in the traffic of the Underground Railroad after coming to Witteberg. Before coming to Iowa John P. Beatty had been a conductor of the Underground Railroad. While a student in an Ohio Academy, Beatty and a number of fellow students terrorized a gang of slave catchers, keeping them prisoners all night in a tavern while the negroes escaped northward. He told of riding night after night, armed to the teeth, carrying this dusky freight toward Canada and freedom.

Very soon after the first settlement, probably in 1854, Rev. Merrill organized a church of Free Presbyterian denomination. He became the first pastor and held that office until 1862, at which time he entered the army as chaplain of one of the Iowa regiments. After Rev. Merrill had gone to the front, Rev. George G. Poage, a farmer-preacher and the father of James R. Poage, supplied the pulpit until the close of the war. Dur-

ing these first years the church had no building of its own but met in the chapel room of the Wittemberg Manual Labor College. In 1865, when the change to the Congregational denomination was made, forty-nine names were placed upon the charter roll of the new church. A few persons remained in the old Free Presbyterian congregation.

As early as 1855 the community had grown to such an extent that it was willing to follow Rev. Merrill in the founding of a college. On December 18 of that year a group of neighbors met at the home of John Carey with this idea in mind. Establishment of this frontier college meant buying land, erecting buildings and supporting a teaching staff. However, this project was undertaken without much promise of outside help. The pioneer trustees depended upon what money they could raise themselves. To show the originality and courage of these early settlers in a country which protected and tolerated slavery, that held to the old classical education, and that ignored or repressed women, witness several articles from the constitution for this school which was adopted on that December evening.

"ARTICLE I. This corporation shall be known as the Wittemberg Manual Labor College and shall be invested with all the powers and immunities and the full period of duration authorized by the Code of Iowa."

"ARTICLE II. The objects of this association shall be established and conduct a literary institution under the above named in Jasper County, Iowa, in which the advantages of a thorough education shall be furnished at least possible expense, to break down so far as our influence may extend the oppressive distinction on account of cast and color and to counteract both by precepts and example a spirit of aristocracy that is becoming so prevalent and which it is feared the policy and influence of many of our institutions of learning have a great tendency to encourage.

These articles aimed definitely at establishing democracy in education. They admit women upon equality with men. They denounce slavery by implication and admit negroes as students.

The first official board consisted of Richard Sherer, President; John Carey and John A. Work, vice presidents; Andrew Failor, secretary; James Crawford, treasurer; Rev. Thomas Merrill, agent. Other members of the board were Mrs. Elizabeth Merrill, Mrs. Mary Carey, James McLaughlin, S.A. Thorn, J.P. Beatty and Thomas Vanatta.

The second meeting of the board of trustees occurred on Christmas Day, 1855. Here rates of tuition were fixed for the term of twelve weeks: Primary Department \$3.00; Common English Branches \$4.00; Advanced English Branches and Languages \$5.00. The college faculty was appointed consisting of Rev. and Mrs. Merrill with a combined salary of \$30.00 per month.

Reports show that there was a deficit of \$45.75 at the end of the first term. At a meeting held September 24, 1856 a financial report for the term ending August 29 was presented. It showed a deficit of \$39.27. At this point there were presumably twenty-six students enrolled.

In establishing the college the board obtained four hundred acres which is said to have contained the present site of Wittemberg Church and cemetery. Here, in order to finance construction of a suitable college building and also to provide an urban setting for the school, the village of Wittemberg was platted. This plat was made by John Carey and Andrew Failor on December 15, 1856, and officially recorded January 12, 1858. The trustees reserved ten acres as a site for the college and laid out much of the remainder in town lots. Many lots were sold and quite a number of homes were built. The college buildings stood at a little distance northeast of the present church building in line with the road running to Newton.

Besides financial difficulties, the new college was also troubled with physical problems. No lumber was available so native wood was purchased from Jesse Hammer at a cost of \$33.00 per acre. John Carey went to Ohio and tried to get a firm to build a portable sawmill according to plans he would furnish. He had difficulty at first in persuading manufacturers that such a mill would be practical. Finally he succeeded in getting one built at Norwalk, Ohio. It was shipped out and worked very well. Probably this was the first saw mill of its kind ever built and used.

The inside of the college building was black walnut, the weatherboarding was white walnut or butternut and the floors were oak. The building finally finished was a large two story structure. Lack of money delayed completion of the building, so on June 22, 1861 the trustees proposed to the Free Presbyterian Church that it meet in the chapel room of the college for a period of five years if it would finish the room in a specific manner. The church accepted these terms and the room was finished.

The cemetery was located on November 24, 1856 and in October 1858 its title was transferred to the Free Presbyterian Church.

Added to the difficulties of the struggling little colony was the financial panic of 1857. It is said that Merrill, Carey, Crawford, King, Failor and Beatty mortgaged their farms for what, in those days, were large sums in order that the building might be finished.

In September 1857, the Merrills began publication of a monthly journal called at first "The Wittemberg Educator" and later changed to "The Wittemberg Review." The press and type were furnished by the trustees but the Merrills did the work and were to receive in return any profits made by the venture. Much of the work of publishing this paper was done by Sarah Merrill who later became the wife of Rev. C. C. Harrah. It is now known how long the Review was published but probably not longer than two or three years.

Rev. Merrill was elected president of the college on January 20, 1860. He left this work to become a chaplain in the army in 1862 and Rev. G. G. Poage succeeded him. The latter remained in this office until the end of the written record.

Although it was a financial burden, the Wittemberg College was termed a success for as long as it lasted. Its enrollment ranged from forty to ninety. In May 1867, a contract was made with Rev. S. A. McLean of Pennsylvania. McLean was to advance the board two thousand dollars in cash and was to use the college building to conduct a school of academy grade for a period of four years. At the end of that time the college was to pay McLean \$4015.00. In 1868 a new agreement was made which turned over a large part of the school property to McLean on condition that he cancel the earlier contract and agree to maintain a school for ten years. This agreement was opposed by a minority of the trustees, one of whom instituted action to prevent its execution. The district court held the contract void but gave McLean a lien on the college property to secure the money owed him by the college. Rev. McLean died in 1869 but his daughters, Elizabeth and Anna, continued the school for several years. Elizabeth was the head of the school and her marriage to Joel Lewis and subsequent leaving brought the school to an end. Before the college closed, the McLean lien had been foreclosed. Redemption was not made so title to all the property passed to the McLean's heirs. The "College Farm" became a farm literally.

With the death of the college, the village of Wittemburg no longer had reason for existence. Wittemberg Village was legally vacated in 1878. Streets that were still used for public highways were kept open. All others were closed. The last physical signs of the village, except for houses which have become farm homes, is the peculiar layout of the roads near the present church.

This story could not be closed without a brief word about the Wittemberg Church. When the Civil War closed in 1865, the Free Presbyterian denomination found its distinctive work done. It differed in no point of doctrine from the Presbyterian Church and the attack upon chattel slavery had been won by the war so most Presbyterian churches were ready to return to the fold. However, some of the Wittemberg Free Presbyterians were unwilling to make the change. Many of them had been members of other churches before coming to Jasper County. A meeting was held and it was decided to change to Congregationalism. Records show that in 1868 a church building was dedicated with a membership of fifty. This was the beginning of the present Congregational Church of Wittemberg.

Mention should also be made here of the Wittemberg Brass Band, which at one time gained considerable reputation. This band made a number of long trips around the country, playing at great gatherings in distant cities. It was an excellent musical organization and had as an added attraction a drum major who is said to have been a wizard in juggling a baton.

Thus the village of Wittemberg, in its own peculiar way, has made its contribution to our present society and left its mark upon the hearts, minds and souls of many of its descendants.

OSWALT

Olin C. Bissell

Oswalt, Iowa was named after Mr. Barny Oswalt, and was platted in 1889. It was located approximately three miles north and west of Colfax, with portions in sections 32 and 33 in Poweshiek Township, and sections 2 and 3 in Washington Township. Coal mining was the reason for its establishment. A large general store, barber shop, meat market, two large boarding houses, school house, feed business, Knights of Pythias hall, and a smaller general store with a post office therein, made up the village. Charles James, owner of the smaller store, was the first postmaster of Oswalt. He resigned in September, 1888, leaving for the West. E.E. Irwin became postmaster in October of the same year, resigning in January, 1892. Elias Frieberg was the next postmaster, holding this office until June, 1895, when the post office was discontinued.

Coal was discovered by Samuel Mell. A number of small mines were opened and the mining of coal became a flourishing industry. D.S. Couch, of Newton became interested and began drilling in 1881, opening a mine in 1882. He built a railroad from Colfax to this mine in the same year. The railroad was known as the Iowa Northern, extending to Valeria the next year. The Diagonal Railroad -- Chicago and Great Western -- built a spur from Valeria to Oswalt. There were the Star Mine, Valeria Coal and Mining Company, Blackheath Mine, and others, which in 1890, were taken over by the Diagonal Railroad. Coal fields extended over considerable territory, both east and west of Oswalt.

Oswalt had no churches. However, the Methodist Society built a chapel near by, and the Salvation Army held meetings near the town. The mines and miners were scattered over the hills for some two or three miles. It was a thriving place, with some 1,800 miners employed.

Mail was carried to Oswalt from Colfax, and in October, 1890, the route extended to Valeria. Coal from this region was shipped by way of the Rock Island, and from Valeria, by the way of Great Western.

July 4th celebrations at Oswalt in 1892 and 1894 were recorded as great events. The scarcity of coal caused the town to disband.

PALMYRA

Jean Gleaves Poage

During the '50s and '60s town sites sprang up like mushrooms. Ambitious landowners hoping to attract settlers would have a likely location plotted. Frequently the site never advanced beyond being a paper town.

Such was the case of PALMYRA in Section 22 of Clear Creek Township. Were it not for Jasper County maps drawn between 1856 and 1862, we might not know of the proposed village. The original plot was signed by Mr. and Mrs. William Southern and Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Keys. At the time there were two dwellings and a tavern.

No doubt the coming of the railroaders caused this project to fail.

PRAIRIE BELLE

Della Wade Peery

Prairie Belle, located in section 32 of Washington Township, had a post office as late as 1903. It consisted of a few houses, one of which, presumably, was a stage coach stop. Old timers can not recall any business establishments other than the post office. There was a church which stood on a corner on the north side of what is now highway 163. South of the church was the stage coach stop, sometimes referred to as "The Old Bidwell Place." Nearby, in Des Moines Township, is the local cemetery where only a few graves are to be found. The farm where Prairie Belle was located now belongs to Wiley Roberts and John Gertz of Prairie City. Roberts says that the farmhouse sets where the post office once stood. Nothing is left of this settlement except the farm known as "Prairie Belle Farm" and the old cemetery.

RUSHVILLE

Clarice McGriff Hoagland

Rushville, which was located in Kellogg Township, had its beginning as a stage coach stop. The platted town was laid out by Jesse and Jane Young on March 24, 1857 on the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter in Section 9, Township 80, Range 18. It was surveyed by Willie P. Cole. The deed was acknowledged before G. W. Carter, a Notary Public, on July 11, 1857 and was recorded on August 12th in that year. Located in an area of fertile soil, farm land there sold for \$266.00 per acre in 1961.

The only store that ever existed in Rushville was operated by a family named Whitcomb. The post office was located in the store.

In 1887 a church building was erected. Previous to this, worship for the Methodist congregation had been conducted in the school building which stood near by. A foreign missionary society was formed in 1890. The church continued its Christian witness in the community until the turn of the century when membership began to dwindle. The church structure was torn down some two or three years ago.

These places, along with several homes and nearby farmsteads wherein lived the Owings, Lee, Wilson, Adams, Morrison, Callison and Whitcomb families, along with others, comprised the Rushville community.

Church functions, box suppers, spelling bees and evening literary programs at the school provided the neighborhood social life.

The late Mrs. Laura Callison of Newton recalled that her father was one of the workmen who helped build the Rock Island Railroad line which runs about two miles south of Rushville. Observing the productive land, it appeared to be a good place in which to farm and rear a family; when Mrs. Callison was sixteen years of age, the family moved to Rushville. Among the possessions brought with them and treasured by Mrs. Callison were a covered glass dish of Thumb Print design and a blue flowered homespun bed coverlet.

Mrs. Callison remembered that Indians from the Tama settlement traveled by with teams and wagons, camping on the nearby North Skunk River bottom. She told of one particular time when a young Indian stopped at their home, requesting bacon for his ailing mother. Her father obliged, giving him some from the smoke house. This act of sharing apparently helped establish a friendly relationship, for Indians who passed by from then on waved in greeting.

Gone are the Indians, the town and even the memory of it except in the minds of a few who knew Rushville as their home town---now another ghost town.

SEVERS

(A JASPER COUNTY MINING TOWN IN THE COAL-RUSH DAYS)

Della Wade Peery and Irene Allison Morton

The story of Severs could easily begin "Once upon a time." Just off highway number six, two miles east of Colfax, is the old Blanford school. Here a gravel road leads straight south. If you drive down this road you will come to a mail box with the name "Slotoski." Here, far to the east you will see all that is left of number seven coal mine, the life blood of the old time village of Severs. Located in section 17 of Mound Prairie Township, Severs consisted of row upon row of houses all painted alike and averaging from three to six rooms in size. There was a company store where one could purchase almost anything he needed, a post office housed within the store, Fred Pearn's Drug Store which sold ice cream, candy and patent medicine, a large Odd Fellow's Hall, a Miner's Hall and a two-room school.

According to Gus DeCamp of Colfax, Severs was established shortly after the opening of Number Seven mine in 1899. Work in the mine drew many immigrants from the Balkan countries,

Italy and England. Soon the population numbered between five and six hundred. These miners were an industrious lot, every family had a cow, chickens, and a horse and buggy. Behind every house was a garden and a cave where they stored vegetables, milk and butter.

The village was named after its owner who came from Oslo. Later the mines and mining camp was purchased by J.B. Ryan of Colfax. The mines were only about forty feet deep. DeCamp says the men working in the tunnels could hear the rumble of the trains above. Rent and medical insurance were taken out of pay checks and script was issued with which to buy provisions at the company store.

A farm wagon and team called the Bakery Wagon went into Colfax every morning and brought back orders from the bakery. "None of the bakery goods was covered," declares Mrs. DeCamp, "but we thought nothing of it in those days."

"Oh well," countered Gus DeCamp, "nobody ate bakery goods but bachelors."

People often rode into Colfax on the bakery wagon or on the miner's train after it had brought two hundred Colfax residents to work in the mines.

The first doctor in Severs was Dr. Weisse. Later they had Dr. Martin. Finally R.G. Anspach and his brother W.E., traveled out from Colfax.

Sunday School and church of Methodist denomination were held in the Miner's Hall. It was organized by Elvin Macy, a nearby farmer. Preachers consisted of students from Indianola who came to Colfax by interurban and stayed for the week end. This church sent its youth to the Colfax chataqua where they heard such famous speakers as Billy Sunday and William Jennings Bryan.

The first school teachers were Catherine and Elizabeth Crawford of Colfax. Most Severs boys quit school after finishing the eighth grade but a few attended Colfax High School walking back and forth each day. The Severs school did turn out some professional men such as David James, D.D.S. and his brother, Professor Abram James.

There were lots of social activities. In the winter there had two square dances a week with as many as eight to ten set at one time. Summer's activities consisted of picnics, celebrations and ball games. Celebrations were held in R. M. Stuart's grove south of town. On July Fourth the Severs children, each carrying a flag, marched up and down the streets then to the grove where they were given tickets for free pop. Bald Jim Jones, band master and drum major, presented a concert with his thirty-two piece Sever's band. This would be followed by home talent, such as old fiddlers or an old fashioned colored minstrel. Fred L. Maytag, mayor of Newton, was guest speaker one year. Then there were the usual athletic events such as races and ball games.

They had a good baseball club called the "Sever's Japs." Managed by Hugh Gunn and John Pratt Sr., this club played for

all the nearby celebrations and county fairs. DeCamp recalls them playing two famous ball clubs, each time drawing a crowd of about 3000. One was Green's Nebraska Indians from Omaha, who had toured the U.S. The other was the Boston Bloomers from Indianapolis, all women, with their own private train. The Japs traveled in an eighteen passenger bus pulled by horses and owned by a man called Crippled Bill.

In 1912 about forty members of the Sever's Odd Fellows Lodge and Matt Davis as captain of the degree team, went to Minneapolis and put on the degree work for Grand Lodge.

The year 1914 saw the first car in Severs with everyone thinking its owner was crazy because he paid \$600 for a car!

People started moving away from Severs as early as 1912. By the close of the first world war the village had become a veritable ghost town whose life span had been approximately eighteen years.

The people of Severs were nearly all immigrants who brought with them the culture and customs of their native lands. DeCamp describes the citizens as good hard working people. Like in every town there were a few who broke the law but they were well taken care of by Joe Pratt Sr., Justice of the Peace. Pratt was also overseer of the poor and helped the foreigners to take out citizenship papers.

Today Severs, Jasper County mining town of the coal rush days, no longer exists. There is no trace of it except in the memories of those who once lived there. Looking out over the pastures and waving fields of grain, trying to visualize the busy little village with its hub-bub of activities, one can only repeat with the author of Alice in Wonderland, "Once upon a time."

ST THOMAS

Della Wade Peery

The mining camp of St. Thomas was located northwest of Colfax in Powesheik Township. Although it was not a platted town, it can not be ignored, as it had a direct influence on the history, population and culture of the present town of Colfax. These interesting facts relating to the history of this one-time village were gleaned from the stories of old timers and the early newspapers.

There was much agitation in the town of Colfax during the late winter of 1896. The St. Thomas coal miners were on strike. The mining company, headed by Judge Ryan of Colfax and a stockholder named Gregg, were unable to negotiate a peaceful and satisfactory contract with the miners. Finally in disgust they went to the mines in the southern part of Iowa and hired a trainload of negroes.

"There was so much talk around town," said D.C. Booth of Colfax, now deceased, "That everyone was sure there would be a riot when the train got in. I went down to meet it, along with the rest of the crowd. But things went off smoothly after all and there was no riot."

"I saw that train pull in, too" says William Hogendorn of Colfax who is a devoted historian. "There were two coaches full of colored men. It was March 18, 1896 when it arrived. They took the men on out to St. Thomas where the mine owners had prepared for them by putting up a tent and a mess hall. Then they lived in boxed cars with heaters until their families arrived in the Spring and houses were built. There were two boarding houses run by white people who refused to board the Negroes. So the mining company purchased the boarding houses and used them for unmarried men."

These Negroes and their families remained in the St. Thomas area for about two years or until the mines began opening south of Colfax. Then they moved into town. The Negro population of Colfax was probably around two hundred or more at its peak. Here they built two churches, organized Men's and Women's clubs with educational and self improvement purposes, sponsored Independence Day celebration, formed an all colored band which gave concerts both in Colfax and surrounding towns, joined lodges and played an active part in the social and cultural activities of their time. Thus the town of Colfax was affected by one of its neighboring ghost towns.

TURNER

Jean Gleaves Poage

Turner, first called "Dixie" was platted April 19, 1899 in NE quarter, NW quarter of Section 34 in Rock Creek Township. Located along the Rock Island Railroad fourteen miles east of Newton, it came to be a busy trading post with a general merchandise store run by Lena Diehl, a creamery owned by E. B. Elliot, and the Turner Coal and Lumber Company. There was also a tavern. In 1910 O. J. Turner was the postmaster.

O. J. Turner was an energetic and prosperous farmer of the area. He came to own seven hundred and twenty acres of land between Newton and Grinnell, and considerable other property. This was quite an accomplishment because he came to Kellogg in 1868 with only ten dollars in his pocket. He had been born and raised in Kentucky, and had served with the Union forces, and had had at least three years at Cumberland College.

For several years he taught at Kellogg and farmed alternately. Later all of his time was devoted to grain and stock farming.

In all probability the little hamlet of Turner could serve only the nearby farmers because of its close proximity to Kellogg, Newton and Grinnell--all of which were well established.

VALERIA

Olin C. Bissell

Valeria, Iowa, with its present population of seventy-six inhabitants, lies among the rolling hills, extending north and east of the South Skunk River, approximately one mile east of the Polk County line, in the northwest corner of section 20 of Poweshiek Township in Jasper County.

In the early sixties, Mr. William Henderson Johnson settled at the location of the present Valeria. The Johnsons were migrants from Tennessee and North Carolina, having moved to the Midwest to set new roots after the Civil War era. Mr. Johnson was a firm believer of community progress, and put forth great effort in making his home one of success. His oldest daughter, Hester, was the first child born in Valeria. However, it was his younger daughter, Valeria, who married the civil engineer, who obtained permission from Mr. Johnson to build the railroad through his land, from whom the name, Valeria, was derived. Valeria, therefore, was known as "a town of a railroad romance." After the laying of the railroad---the Chicago and Great Western---in the early 1880's, the settlement became an incorporated town, having been platted in October, 1883 by Mr. and Mrs. N. W. Johnson.

The first church, Methodist, was established in 1890, the Reverend Patterson being its minister. The church building, then erected, was thirty by forty feet at a cost of \$2000.00. The first members of this church were Mrs. Henninger of Bondurant, Mrs. Mary Henninger, Mrs. Maria Lawrence and Mr. and Mrs. Poling. When the Great Cyclone of 1896 passed through Valeria, this church building was removed four feet from its foundation. The ministers who served this church also served the Methodist Church at Ira. (These facts are found on page 157 ---"Past and Present of Jasper County, Iowa" by General James B. Weaver, Volume 1, published in 1912.)

The Catholic Church was also organized, being served by the Colfax priest.

A rural school sufficed the educational needs of the early children. Later, a two-room brick school was built, taking care of the grade requirements until its consolidation with the Mingo schools.

Dr. J. R. Ryan, a close friend of the Johnson's was the most prominent of the early settlers. A sanitarium was erected, in charge of Drs. Louis and Alice (Bell) Turner.

In 1882, the Chicago and Great Western Railroad extended a spur from Valeria to Oswalt, as a shipping outlet for coal from this flourishing community. The population of Valeria in 1900 was one hundred and fifty. A bank was established in 1901 by Benjamin Falen. By 1910, business establishments consisted of two general stores, operated by C. J. Ryan and J. Y. Fiddler; a hotel and restaurant, managed by H. Stiers; a barber shop in charge of W. M. Keever; a hardware store run by J. A. Radley;

a lumber yard by H. E. Stoke; livery owned by J. C. Stanley; Miss Della Vernocom's Millinery shop; the Charles Worrick Drug Store and the Gannon Brothers grain dealers. (Pages 340-341, "Past and Present of Jasper County, Iowa," by Weaver.)

The town began its decline in the early part of the twentieth century. By 1910 the population was less than one hundred. Several factors entered into the cause of Valeria's decline, the great cyclone of 1896, several disastrous fires and the exhausted supply of coal.

VANDALIA

Della Wade Peery

Come along with me to Vandalia in the southwest corner of Jasper County. We must take the trip by automobile since there are no longer hack lines between this town and Prairie City. Almost a hundred years ago we might have gone in the hack at a very reasonable fare. Perhaps H.

very reasonable fare. Perhaps H.C. Deakin would be the driver, wearing his high plug hat and cracking his whip at the horses. He might even crack his whip at you if you are a deadbeat on trying to get a free ride.

Vandalia is nestled on the hills of Des Moines Township in section 36, two miles from Marion County and one mile from Polk. One of the first settlers was John Q. Deakin who purchased the land on which the town is located. Other early settlers were men named Zachary and Hayes. The town was first established as a trading post in the late 1840's. Platted by Joseph W. Buffington in February, 1853, it was known by the name of Quincy then later changed to Vandalia.

By 1861 Vandalia had made greater growth than the town of Monroe, keeping up this growth until the end of the Civil War. At the peak, its population was around seven hundred. In 1865 it boasted four general stores, two mills, two hotels, two blacksmith shops, two wagon shops and a plow factory. Its first store was opened by Deakin's father-in-law, Henry Shearer. Other early stores were the Bert Sims Drug and Grocery, the Ira E. Draper Store, Cavitts and Boswells. It was said that Cavitt, who sold hardware, groceries and dry goods, helped the community by extending credit until he himself went broke.

Ira E. Draper, who operated his store during and right after the Civil War, was also the postmaster and editor of Vandalia's one and only newspaper. In his store you could purchase four pounds of Rio coffee for \$1.00, Grape Juice tobacco at fifteen cents a plug, Buckhorn soda at two pounds for a quarter, good dress prints for twelve and one-half cents per yard, jeans for seventy-five cents, men's hats at seventy-five cents and men's suits for \$12.00. Salt was purchased by the barrel

at \$3.15. Customers bought as high as forty-two pounds of coffee at one time. Draper also advertised chip hats, moccasin shoes and lady's hats of the mashed pancake style. Signs in Draper's store read 'Gentlemen, please do not spit on the floor. To do so may spread disease,' and 'Young men, no profanity is allowed in here.'

The first flour mill was built by Deakin in 1850. In digging a well for the carding factory, Deakin struck a vein of coal twenty feet below the surface. The vein was four foot thick and used to heat his buildings. By 1870, steam was used to run the flour mills. Deakin also built the first saw mill in Vandalia. The latter was located on Camp Creek near the west line of the county. Here he cut large quantities of lumber which he sold to people for miles around.

All kinds of work was done in the two blacksmith shops. Horses and mules were shod on short notice. Wagons, carriages, wheelbarrows and plows were manufactured or repaired. All work was guaranteed but the smith had a hard and fast rule of cash on the line.

The Civil War brought a gunsmith to Vandalia who advertised that he had big guns, little guns, long guns, short guns, smooth bores, rifles, shotguns, broad axes and log chains. In fact, F. J. Anderson was prepared to furnish the vicinity with all the implements of war.

Prior to the year 1870, J.H. Mohler opened a harness shop where harness and saddles were made from the best Pittsburgh oak tanned harness leather. There were also two boot and shoe manufacturers, Joshua Rose and L.T. Hayes. Furniture was manufactured by D. F. Pulver who could make any thing in the furniture line to order. A. Castleman, who operated the photograph gallery, also repaired watches, clocks, sewing machines and jewelry. Vandalia even had a dressmaker, Miss Josie E. Wilson.

Much coal was discovered in and around Vandalia. Half way between that town and Prairie City was what was known as Coal Hollow, with Charles Morris as its first owner. The mines went back into the hillside and were held up with props. People would come at daybreak with team and wagon to get a load of coal. Many times they had to wait their turn in bitter cold, then walk home beside the filled wagon.

Wheat, oats, and corn were the chief farm products. The newspaper, "Vandalia Visitor," states that even in 1870 there was a good surplus. Wheat was priced at eighty cents and corn at twenty-five cents, both prices less than the cost of production. At that time a 280 acre farm sold for as little as \$7500.

Some of Vandalia's early doctors were H. C. Potter, T. J. Stafford, Henry Gourhame, A. M. Morris and Dr. Anson. More has been told about doctors Potter and Anson than the others. Potter was very successful in his profession, a radical republican and a good Methodist. It was said of Dr. Anson that he did not know how to make money but he did know how to cure the sick. He never left a patient's side until that patient was on the road to recovery.

The "Vandalia Visitor" mentions one lawyer, a Mr. Rose, who was also Justice of the Peace, a very accommodating gentleman who was well qualified to dispense justice according to law and the merits of the case.

Vandalia's two hotels, The Vandalia House and The Pulver House were well known in the 1870's. Here fancy balls were held with young people coming from miles around to square dance. There would be as many as one hundred couples---hardly enough room at the hitching racks for all the horses and buggies. The Pulver House was the stage coach stop. This famous landmark was destroyed by fire in 1938. Here many antiques were burned including eleven caskets and a spinning wheel.

Vandalia was on a stage coach route between Ottumwa and Des Moines. When the railroad boom started, citizens signed pledges to donate money to help finance the iron horse through Vandalia. In 1870, according to the "Vandalia Visitor," they were still anticipating the railroad. "When it comes," says editor Draper, "we will be as proud as other people and put on airs like they do. So, Mr. Mereshon, send along your smoke wagon and we'll all take a ride."

Vandalia's first school was established in the 1850's. The first teacher mentioned was George Reese. Almost twenty years later the "Vandalia Visitor" describes this school as having two teachers and eighty to one hundred scholars. Located on a hill southwest of town, it was one of the social centers of the community. Here sumptuous dinners were held on the last day of school, followed by programs consisting of music, recitations and the reading of very well written essays. Titles for some of the latter were "The Pursuit of Happiness," "Be True," and "The Influence of the Female Character."

Christian and Presbyterian Church societies were organized before 1865. Baptist and Methodist denominations also made their appearances at an early date. The Visitor also mentioned a Congregational church. Sunday School picnics were held in the J. Q. Deakin grove.

The "Vandalia Visitor" was free to anyone who cared to receive it. Expense of printing was paid by advertising and it contained ads from Vandalia, Prairie City, Monroe, Newton, Colfax and Des Moines. The caption at the top of page one of this quaint paper was "Owe No Man Anything." Besides local news and advertising was to be found such brief news summaries as follows:

The New York Telegram says Mark Twain is to be married in May.

The first through train from Chicago over the Burlington and Missouri R.R. has arrived at Council Bluffs making the trip in twenty-two hours.

The Vinton Journal has found a man who not only knew the inventor of the very first threshing machine but also had this to say: "The inventor was indolent and a half fool. His machine was made of wood."

Jenny Lind will now reside in Marseilles.

Astonishing fashions in lady's spring hats are promised. Perhaps the bonnet will be worn under the chin and a bow knot tied on top of the head.

A western girl says she likes to make bread because it cleans her hands so beautifully.

Velvet boots the color of the dress are now being worn.

How to keep out of debt---don't get in it.

Imperishable paper coffins, the latest device of yankee genius are now being made at Madison, Conn.

Indian Summer in February: On February 26, 1870, a boy walked barefooted down the Vandalia streets. Men were all clad in shirtsleeves. Later the weather changed--the river riz, the winds whiz, then it friz, then it blew, then it snowed, then it thawed, then it mizzled, then it fizzled and black, sticky mud became the staple article visible to the eye.

The question of building a new capitol in Des Moines is now exciting interest in the state.

The Visitor has a circulation of 1000 copies.

Plug hats are now raging in Prairie City.

The year 1871 marks the last issue of the Visitor.

Some of the last issues of "The Visitor" carried the news of many Vandalia citizens moving to Prairie City. The long expected railroad had bypassed the town of Vandalia. Thus it is that a town rises to its peak then declines, leaving a sleepy little village in its wake. The old school has been moved to Main Street and is now the town's one and only general store. None of the former churches remain. However, there are two churches in the present village, "The Church of Christ" and "The Four Square." Four of the original houses are left standing. The population has dwindled to approximately fifty. The town's decline can best be described in the words of Editor Draper, himself.

Don't call us ugly names. Many persons who have not the fear of the Lord will insist upon applying to our ancient and unpretentious city all kinds of harsh and ugly names. This is unrighteous and very naughty and it is in direct opposition to the oft repeated advice of 'always respect old age.' It never looks well for boys to throw

stones at old men and for anyone to apply such appendages to the beautiful and euphonious name of Vandalia as 'dilapidated,' 'rusty', 'run down at the heel,' 'defunct', 'fizzled out', 'gone up the spout', and sich like, etc., is very reprehensible and should be discontinued at the earliest possible moment consistent with the health and future welfare of the perpetrators of these gentle innuendoes. Our retired village is just what circumstances have made it and if it is not a city of magnificent proportions it is no fault of the town. Be patient and hopeful a little while longer gentlemen. Perhaps when the 'plug' road leaves the local banks south of Newton for the Gulf of Mexico, screaming and cavorting, it may in all probability snort right through Vandalia and bring peace, happiness and prosperity to an almost desponding but prayerful people. With such prospects of fortune before us, we would ask in gentle tones that our neighbors shall deal with us kindly for we too may one day be prosperous and happy. Don't call us ugly names.

GLEANINGS

Della Wade Peery

It could truthfully be said that in the writing of history there is no end for as long as man lives there will always be history and a subsequent need for historians. In trying to put together the jig-saw puzzle which consists of intricate stories of the past there are bound to be omissions and in some instances, mistakes. Neither have been intentional and we hope no offence will be taken. Much of this history has been gleaned from citizens who have lived their entire lives in these various communities. Without them and their marvelous faculty to remember, a great deal of local history would be lost forever. We have tried to confine this compilation to platted towns but in some cases have digressed due to the interest element of some of these bygone settlements. There are also some settlements of which we have been able to find little more than a name. I shall endeavor to mention a few of these here and, as previously stated, many will doubtless be inadvertently omitted.

Listed in the postal directory of 1885, Morristown was located northwest of Colfax on the south side of section 5 in Poweshiek Township. It is named on an old map in the county auditor's office and located on a stage coach route. There is no mention of it in the early newspapers of Colfax and no one in the vicinity seems to have heard of it. It is presumed that it was either a coalmining settlement or a stagecoach stop.

Andersonville, commonly called 'Gobbler's Roost', was a coal mining settlement east of Colfax. It was settled by whites

and a few colored people, many of whom moved to Severs later. Not much is known about this settlement.

The Plummer Neighborhood was highlighted by the Levi Plummer stagecoach stop, located in Powesheik Township. There is no one living who knows too much about this community. A few assorted facts were gleaned from "The Colfax Clipper," a weekly newspaper in the 1880s. These facts were of no particular historical significance except to bear out the fact that such a neighborhood did exist at one time.

Coaltown was located four miles south of Newton undoubtedly when the coalmines in that area first opened. Old timers say that it was occupied by miners, their families and a number of dogs. Mention was made of the fact that the dogs seemed to have a way of disappearing when the tax assessor came to call.

Other places shown on the early maps which may have been settlements or merely stage coach stops or railroad junctions were Wilson, Lynn Junction, Salem Station, Oak Hill and many others. There is no record showing plats of these places.

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